

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

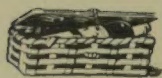


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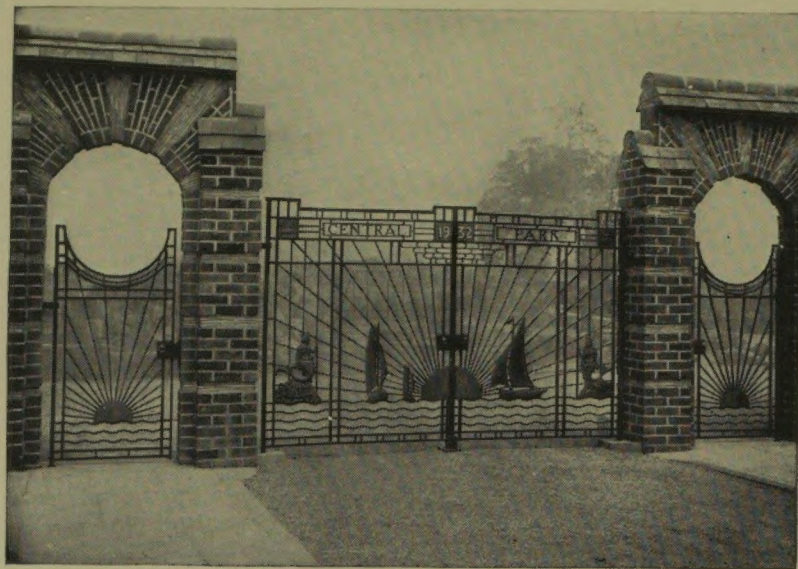


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SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

COVER - PICTURE IN COLOURS: THE - VIRGIN AND CHILD. By ANDREA DELLA ROBBIA. With Four from his series of Roundels representing the Months.

By Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PRESENTATION PLATE: "HANDLE WITH CARE: TWO FULL, ONE RETURNED EMPTY." From the Picture by CECIL ALDIN, the famous painter of dogs.

A companion picture to the three Cecil Aldin subjects published with *The Illustrated London News* Christmas Numbers of 1929, 1930, and 1931. Two greedy little dogs lie in repletion, the third sits in misery and hunger, by an empty bowl.

CHRISTMAS OF NINETY YEARS AGO. A Full-Page in Colours from the Picture by GORDON NICOLL.

Taking one back to the first year of *The Illustrated London News*, this picture shows a family Christmas party of 1842.

DREAM CHILDREN OF CHRISTMAS PAST IN THE WONDERLAND OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. A Full-Page in Colours from the Picture by LILIAN ROWLES.

THE CYMBAL-BOY. A Short Story by BARBARA BINGLEY. With Illustrations by GORDON NICOLL.

The true story of Nicholas Thorp, Drum-Major in the Peninsular War, telling how he and his love, Jacintha, outwitted the wealthy and brutal Portuguese nobleman, Dom João, Conde de Evora.

AN UNFAMILIAR VERSION OF THE FLOOD. From a Fifteenth-century French Illuminated manuscript.

This beautiful mediæval illumination vividly illustrates some of the many quaint accretions which later Jewish fancy added to the original simple story of the Flood.

ALLON GAY, GAY, BERGÈRES. An old French song. Illuminated by ERNEST H. SHEPARD.

This charming version of an old Christmas song was written by the royal organist at the French court in the sixteenth century. An English translation is given at the side.

MA MÈRE, HELLAS! MARIEZ-MOY. An old French song. Illuminated by ERNEST H. SHEPARD.

This little song, written at the Court of Burgundy at the beginning of the sixteenth century, captures, in its few short lines, all the joy of youth and spring. Mr. Shepard's charming illumination also presents the crabbedness of age.

PIRATES. A Full-Page in Colours from the Picture by NORMAN LINDSAY.

The eternal heroes of the schoolboy are wreaking havoc in a settlement of the western islands; and their distorted countenances bespeak a terror which they share with their victims.

THE SHEPHERD. A Christmas Story by MARGUERITE STEEN, Author of "Unicorn" and "The Wise and the Foolish Virgins." With Illustrations by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.

A dramatic tale in which a modern shepherd saw the glory that shone around on Christmas Eve.

"LET US NOW GO EVEN UNTO BETH-LEHEM." Reproduced from the Original Colour Decorations by FIONA CAMERON.

The journey of the wise men and of the shepherds, as the story is related in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, is told again here, adorned with seven illustrations in miniature.

ODYSSEUS AND THE SIRENS. A Page in Colours from the Picture entitled, "Off the Albanian Coast," by S. H. SIME. With a passage from the Odyssey, translated into English by C. E. BYLES.

The picture shows the bark of Odysseus "of many wiles" sailing past the isle of the sirens.

THE MERRY MONARCH AND THE "IMPUDENT COMEDIAN." A Full-Page in Colours from the Picture entitled "Charles II. and Nell Gwynn," by Edward Matthew Ward, R.A.

Evelyn, as he notes in his diary, strongly disapproves of his Majesty's conversation with Mrs. Nelly.

AFTER WORCESTER FIGHT. A Page in Colours from the Painting by EDGAR BUNDY. With Verses by C. E. BYLES.

The tribulations of the Cavalier fugitives after Cromwell's "Crowning Mercy" are given expression in this beautiful picture. Let us hope the Roundhead at the door passes by.

BOSCOBEL: THE TRUE TALE OF A ROYAL ADVENTURE. By ARTHUR BRYANT, Author of "King Charles II." With Nine Illustrations.

The "most romantic episode in English history" is described here—the story of King Charles's flight and escape from the Roundheads after the Battle of Worcester, and his refuge in the oak-tree of Boscobel Wood.

THE POWER OF THE GOD JUMLOO. A Legend of the High Hills by BARBARA BINGLEY. Illustrated with Wood Blocks by LETTICE SANDFORD.

The poor Saddhu at Fatehpur Sikri tells of how the greatest of Emperors had once to bow before the power of Jumloo.

THE WANDERING SHEPHERD. A Legend of the High Hills by BARBARA BINGLEY. Illustrated with Wood Blocks by LETTICE SANDFORD.

The old shepherd on the hills tells how the strange bird's voice is none other than that of the Princess still seeking for her shepherd lover.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD IN ART. Four Full-Pages in Colours. I.—By Raphael. II.—By Filippino Lippi. III.—By Murillo. IV.—By Sandro Botticelli.

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FAMOUS DREAMS. Four Full-Pages in Colours. From Pictures Specially Painted for *The Illustrated London News* by JOSÉ SEGRELLES. I.—Charles VI. and His Flying Hart. II.—The Drowning Visions of Clarence. III.—Nightmares of Nero. IV.—King Arthur's Vision of the Bear and Dragon.

A series of brilliant imaginative paintings recapturing the mystery, the horror, or the charm of dreams dreamt by princes of old—as they are recorded in literature or legend.

THE HAPPY VALLEY. A Short Story by DAPHNE DU MAURIER, Author of "I'll Never Be Young Again." With Illustrations by A. K. MACDONALD.

First happiness, then death, was what the girl saw in her visions of the happy valley.

CHILDREN BY OLD MASTERS: THE BEAUTY OF YOUTH IN ART. A Page containing Four Reproductions in Colours. I.—"The Infante Don Balthasar Carlos." By Velasquez. II.—"Portrait of Clara Alewyn." By Dirck Dircksz Santvoort. III.—"Two Young Princes." By Anton Rafael Mengs. IV.—"Portrait of a Little Boy." By Wybrand Symonsz de Geest.

This delightful page shows the heights that the Masters reached when their subject was the charm of childhood.

PLAY AND PRAYER IN OTHER CLIMES: CHINESE CHILDHOOD OF OLD. A Page containing Four Reproductions in Colours from a Chinese Painting of the Ming Period.

And here, to compare with the conceptions of Western Masters, is a charming page of Chinese children—the subjects taken from one large scroll-painting of the Ming Period.

TALKING OF HATS. A Short Story by K. R. G. BROWNE, Author of "Yes, Madam," "Leave It to Susan," etc. With Illustrations by JOHN CAMPBELL.

In this modern love-story a romance that was almost ruined by a hat is made by a lift sticking between two floors.

NOTE.—All the characters in the fiction in this number are imaginary.

McLAREN'S HILL

by KENNETH JAMES

Illustrated by C.E. Turner.



WHERE the easternmost borders of Burma touch Chinese territory it lies, a gaunt massif thinly crested with pines, erecting itself unexpectedly from the plain which slopes down to the Mekong River. McLaren had taken it a year before from four hundred truculent Chinamen, who had established themselves there to deal with his outpost, sole defenders of that line of frontier, before they descended on the rich plains of Shanland. They had crossed the border and sent a message to McLaren that they were waiting. He had accepted the challenge joyfully, and covered the sixty miles which separated the hill from Keng Kha, his outpost, in three forced marches. The Chinamen, accustomed to a more leisurely warfare, had not expected the thunderbolt attack which McLaren launched the evening he arrived. They had broken under the onslaught of his seventy Gurkhas and retired across the border, badly mauled, but still defiant.

A Shan trader had brought a message to the British officer from their commander.

"Some day we will return and take the hill again."

McLaren had sent back his answer: "Not while I command Keng Kha."

Hand on a kukri-hilt, he had sworn it in front of his men, both the ranks of the living and the bodies of his twenty dead. That was a year ago. Now the Chinamen had returned, and McLaren, emaciated, his head on fire, lay tossing on his narrow camp cot, and cursed wearily at the Indian doctor who attended him.

When news had reached the post of the impending transgression of the border, McLaren had unwillingly sent Cox, his assistant, with seventy-five rifles, to stop the invaders. Only inability to leave his bed had prevented him from accompanying the column, and he had fretted since the moment they marched down the rocky track that led from the post.

His voice, weak and angry, came now from the camp bed. "Blast you, doctor, why can't you do something? Those swine must be crossing the border now and making for the hill. Haven't you got any dope that'll put me right?"

The doctor, a mild Hindu from Bombay, answered gently. "There is nothing beyond what I am doing. It is a very bad attack of malaria. You must rest and not worry. Captain Cox will drive them off, you will see—they are only Chinese!"

He tried to speak jocularly, but the attempt was subjugated by anxiety for his patient. He had mentioned malaria, but he knew very well that his patient was suffering from typhoid fever, and that his condition was more than critical.

"Cox? Yes, Cox is all right, I suppose." The weary voice from the bed spoke again. "Still, it's not his hill. It's mine—mine, damn it! I must go."

A shadow darkening the door made McLaren look up. He raised himself eagerly on one elbow. "There's a signaller. Cox must have made contact. Quick, doctor, give me the message."

He snatched it from the other's hand and read: "Postcom. Keng Kha. Established position on the hill. aaa. Five hundred Chinese. aaa. Expect attack at dusk. Cox."

McLaren sighed deep relief. "We've got there first, anyway, doc. The hill's safe for the time being."

Excitement had wrought on McLaren's fever, and as evening came he went into high delirium. He sang snatches of songs; curt parade orders came from him, and then he was fighting the battle of the hill again.

"Get that gun forward, Manbahadur. . . . Come on, give 'em hell! . . . Worry, worry, worry, you little devils!" The doctor leaned over

[Continued on page 49.]

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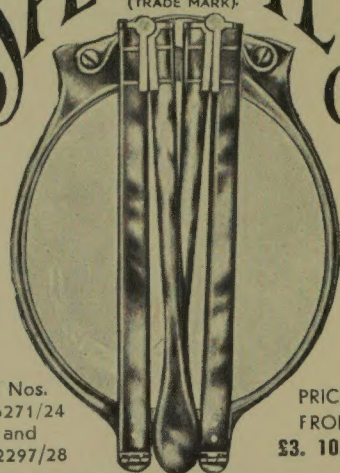
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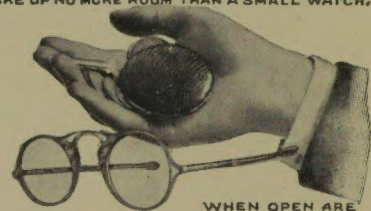


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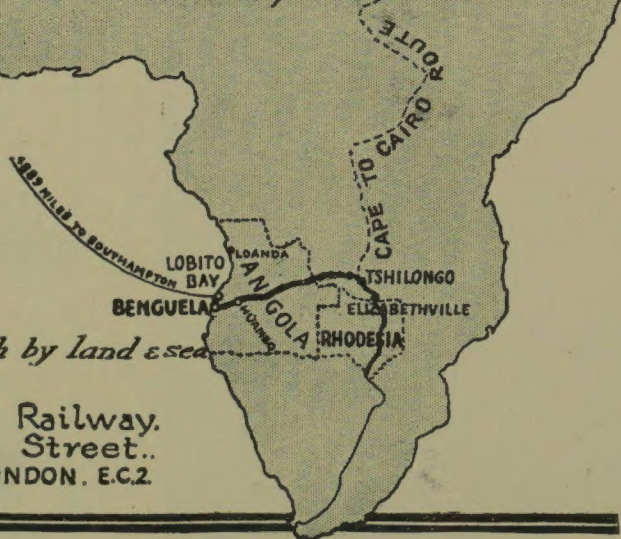
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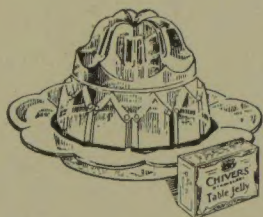
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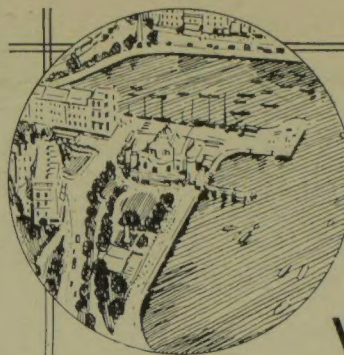
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On the left is an aerial view of the Pavilion and Harbour.



On the right are the lovely Princess Gardens.

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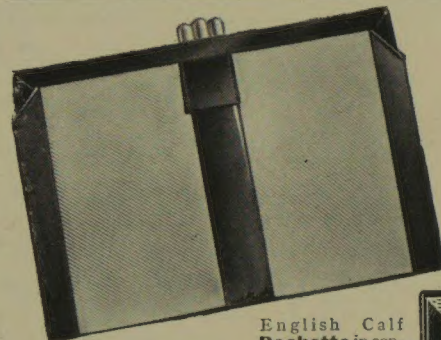
TORQUAY ENGLAND'S RIVIERA



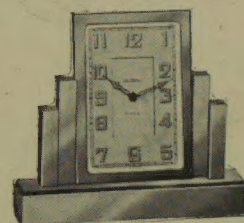
Here on the left are the Medical Baths which, with their "Vita" Glass Sun Lounge are famous throughout England.



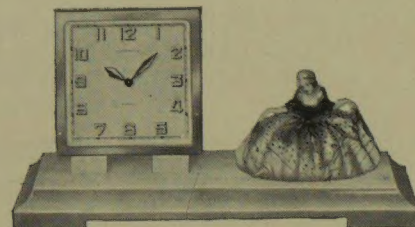
On the right is a view of Babacombe—one of the beauty spots of the district.



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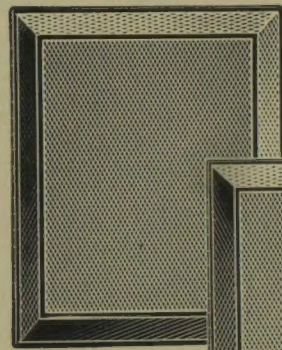
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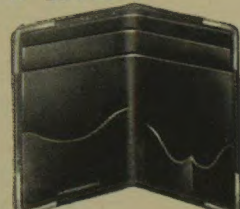
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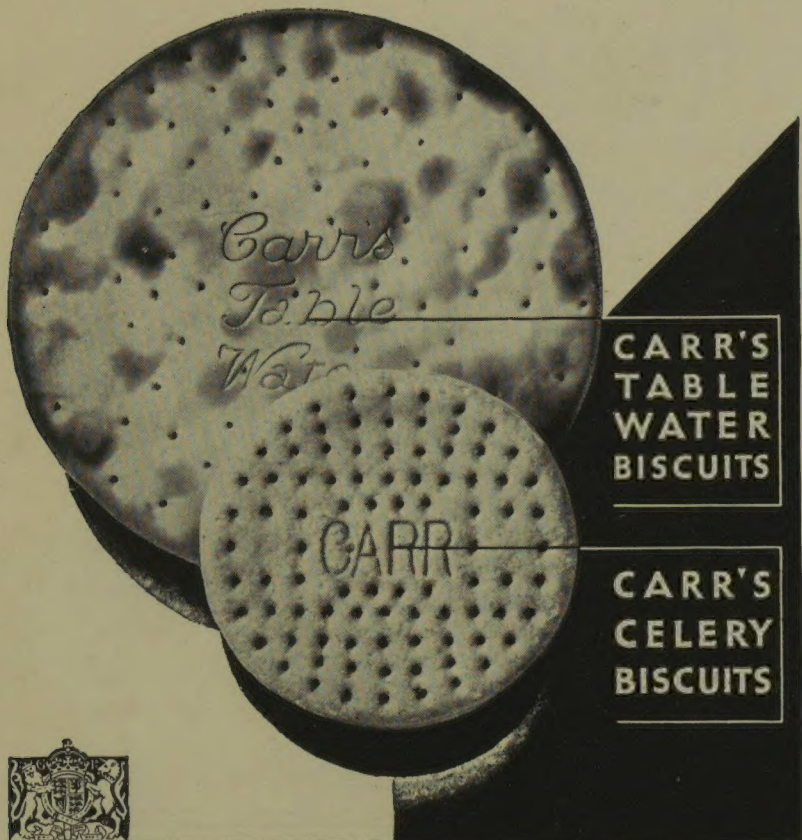
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Christmas Number 1932



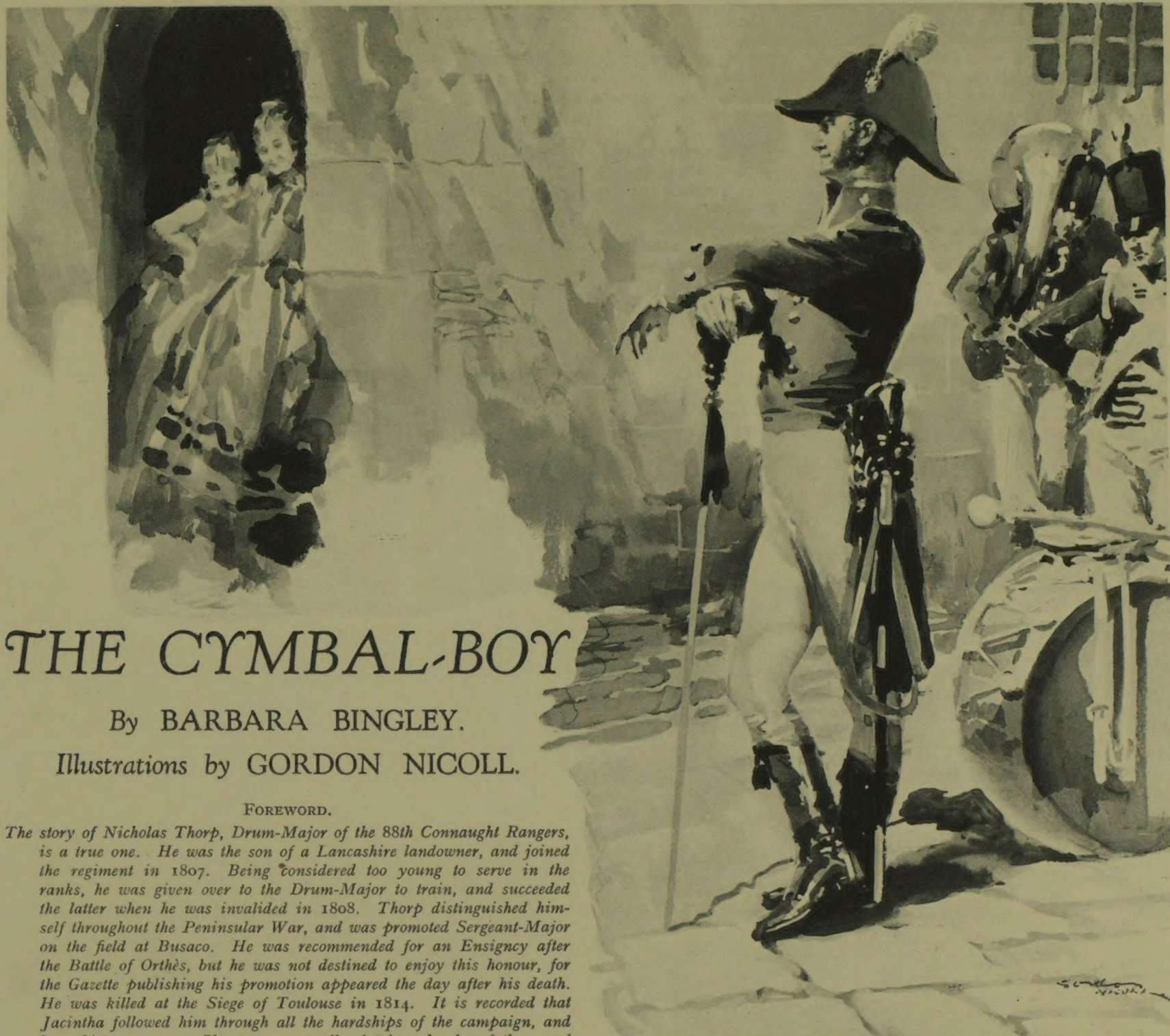
CHRISTMAS DAY IN 1842.

Gordon Nicoll's picture will serve to remind our readers that "The Illustrated London News" was founded ninety years ago.



DREAM CHILDREN OF CHRISTMAS PAST IN THE WONDERLAND OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

FROM THE PAINTING BY LILIAN ROWLES.



THE CYMBAL-BOY

By BARBARA BINGLEY.

Illustrations by GORDON NICOLL.

FOREWORD.

The story of Nicholas Thorp, Drum-Major of the 88th Connaught Rangers, is a true one. He was the son of a Lancashire landowner, and joined the regiment in 1807. Being considered too young to serve in the ranks, he was given over to the Drum-Major to train, and succeeded the latter when he was invalided in 1808. Thorp distinguished himself throughout the Peninsular War, and was promoted Sergeant-Major on the field at Busaco. He was recommended for an Ensigncy after the Battle of Orthès, but he was not destined to enjoy this honour, for the Gazette publishing his promotion appeared the day after his death. He was killed at the Siege of Toulouse in 1814. It is recorded that Jacintha followed him through all the hardships of the campaign, and bore him one son. She was eventually forgiven by her father, and returned to his house at Campo Mayor with her child.

The King of Spayne's daughter
She sits among her maids,
They bend them to their 'broidery
Before the daylight fades—
The King of Spayne's daughter
She sighs among her maids:
"I would I were a gallant knight
With a sharp sword by my side,
I am weary of the needle,
And it's mount my heart and ride . . ."—*Traditional.*

NICHOLAS THORP sang like a March robin; his tune sounded sweet, careless, and very well pleased with itself. So, indeed, was Nick, and why not? He could draw his "sharp sword" whenever it pleased him, and he cared less than a pin for the King of Spayne's daughter and her melancholy. The sun shone, the red wine of Oporto warmed his veins, the French were on the run; and to Nick, twenty years old, and Drum-Major of the 88th, there was no pleasanter place in the world than Campo Mayor on a September afternoon in the year of grace 1809. It was no wonder he sang. He had done well at Talavera, and with the remembrance of the Colonel's praises to kindle his youthful ardour afresh, and sweeten every glass he drank, it came easy to him to turn the coarse, ugly business of war into a high and gallant adventure.

It was the hour of the siesta. Campo Mayor drowsed in the autumn sun. Green shutters lidded the windows; the dogs lay limp in the doorways; the fruit-women slept with their heads on their oranges, and in a courtyard behind an iron gate the shadow of a great fig-tree patterned the ground.

Nick gazed at the inviting seat beneath the tree. The gate swung open as he leant his elbows on it. He hesitated. Well, and why not? Wasn't he one of General Picton's boys? A Connaught Ranger—and weren't they the rescuers of the Portuguese from the tyranny of Boney? Surely the folk of the house wouldn't deny a poor lad his sleep under their tree, and he doing no harm at all! So Nick stepped across the

paving-stones, dusted the seat to save his white pantaloons, and took off his great plumed hat to cool his forehead. He was a well-looking lad. His mother had been from Galway, and she dowered her son with the gifts of gentle eye and heart and voice. Nick was more her son than gruff Farmer Thorp's of Lancashire, and it was fitting that when he took the scarlet coat he should wear the harp of Erin on his breast-plate. There was always a merriment with him, and a kind word, and he had the mad courage of those who are afraid to fear.

Now you must know that the house behind the courtyard belonged to Senhor José Alphonso Cherito, the Juiz da Fora—a most notable person in the town of Campo Mayor. Notable and prudent was Dom José; a long, sallow man, who looked as if his wine had turned to vinegar within him. He believed in precautions: he lent money to no man, and the windows of his house were barred. Behind the bars, Jacintha Cherito sighed, stabbed at her embroidery, and pricked her finger. She swore—it was a very small oath, and the cope destined for the holy and bony shoulders of his Eminence the Cardinal slid off her knees, and its golden lilies lay unheeded on the floor as she listened, dark head a-tilt, to the song which rang out in the courtyard below.

"Dolores, Dolores, come here," she whispered. But her cousin Dolores, the good and docile, pointed a warning towards her mother. Senhora Isabella Gonsalves sat in her high-backed chair, her stays creaking rhythmically as she slept. Jacintha wrinkled her pretty nose, stole to the window and beckoned again. "It is an English soldier—I think an officer. He is most beautiful, as beautiful as St. Michael."

Dolores hesitated; Jacintha was craning out of the window, excitement quivering every frill of her petticoat, and the temptation to join her was too great. So Dolores linked arms with her cousin, and together they stared down at Nick, who puffed his pipe and sang his stave all unconscious of their admiration—

"I am weary of the needle,
And it's mount my heart and ride . . ."

Jacintha listened entranced, for wasn't this song all about herself? Didn't she hate the needle, and sigh all day to be riding over the hills with the wind in her hair? If they gave her a sword, she knew she could fight as well as any man. Dolores' nudge brought her back to earth.

"What is he singing about?"

"Stupid, have you forgotten all the English you learnt at the Convent from Mother Scolastica? The song is my song. It tells of a girl who was made to sew when she longed to be free—free." Jacinth's eyes filled with angry tears, and her red shoe darted a kick at the Cardinal's lilies. "Dios, how I hate his Eminence and his great stiff cope!"

"Jacintha, you must not!" gasped Dolores. "It is sacrilege." "I will, and his Eminence can go to the devil for all I care." Jacinth's voice rose shrilly—too shrilly, and Senhora Isabella opened her eyes, black and bitter as sloeberies, and surveyed her daughter and her niece with disfavor.

"Was my permission accorded to you to leave your places?"

With a frightened "Pardon, Madam," Dolores slipped back to her embroidery frame. Jacinth replied, with a pert glance towards the window. The song had ceased, and the singer's eyes were shut.

"What, may I ask, distracted you from your duties?"

"The chirping of some strange bird, Senhora," Jacinth replied, with a pert glance towards Dolores.

Senhora Goncalves observed her niece coldly. The girl was growing daily more like her mother—that wild gipsy creature whom Dom José married in a moment of infatuation, a moment so deeply regretted that, ever since, his native caution had doubled itself. He had not suffered long from the result of his folly, for a Providence which Senhora Isabella never ceased to praise deprived him of his wife when her child was a few years old. After her death, Dom José invited his widowed sister to direct his household.

"It is unseemly to stare out into the street like a serving-wench. It had been my intention to take you driving with me, but since you have neglected your needlework, I consider it my duty to leave you behind to finish what you have left undone. Take up your embroidery."

"I will not." The suppressed rebellion of many months sounded in Jacinth's voice. "You have no right to keep me stitching indoors on my birthday. I am fifteen, and a woman, yet you treat me as if I were a child."

"You are impatient. What you say is true. You are no longer a child to be corrected with a whipping. You have grown beyond my control, and it is time you had a husband to tame your wildness."

Jacintha shrugged her shoulders, and turned her back on her aunt. She looked at the young man seated beneath the fig-tree. His fair, unpowdered hair glistened where the sunlight pierced through the canopy of leaves. They said that in England ladies went riding and hunting with their gentlemen. Brazenly, delightfully, Jacinth began to day-dream.

"Neither I nor your father have forgotten your age," Senhora Isabella continued. "Knowing it is your birthday he has arranged to entertain some friends at supper. He wishes you to be there—for a special reason."

"What do you mean?" The girl swung round, there was something ominous in her aunt's voice.

"As I told you, it was my intention to take you driving with me, but since your mood is hardly suited to the purchase of bridal finery, I shall leave you behind."

"Bridal finery!" Jacinth gasped. "Am I to be married, then?"

Senhora Isabella bowed her head, and rose, smoothing out her brocade skirts. Jacinth caught her hands. "Who is he? You must tell me, Aunt."

But Senhora Isabella disengaged herself. "It is your father's wish that you should know nothing till this evening. You will remain here till Pepita comes to dress you. I see I have given you some food for thought. Come, Dolores."

The door shut with a click, and the sound of a key being turned. Jacinth stood quite still in the centre of the room. Marriage. She had never expected that. She shivered a little. Lina, the friend whom she had loved most at the Convent, had married. The day after she had said good-bye to the nuns her father had given her to Dom João, Conde de Evora, the richest man in the province of Algarve. There were tales about Dom João, the huge, handsome Senhor. Ladies discussed him behind their fans in half-shocked, half-admiring whispers; and Pepita, the old nurse, crossed herself when his name was mentioned.

Jacintha had only seen Lina at her wedding. She was changed. Yes, Lina the merry one, the leader of mischief, had grown pale and humble. She wore a gown of russet velvet, but she had lost her beauty, and there was a bruise on her throat. They had not been alone save for the moment when Jacinth ran out after the carriage to kiss her friend farewell.

"What it is like to be married, Lina?" She had whispered as they clung together; and Lina, with a frightened glance over her shoulder, answered: "Ah, it is terrible—terrible. He is like an ogre. Jésus, I wish I had had the vocation. Do not marry, little one, it is torture."

They did not meet again, for Lina died soon after, and now they said Dom João was seeking for another bride.

No, Jacinth did not want to marry. Dios, she wished she were a man and could march away to the war. She walked restlessly up and down the room. The reflection of her yellow damask gown swam in the round gilt mirror above the mantelpiece like a goldfish in a bowl. She stopped to stare at herself.

"Pretty—pretty!" a harsh voice croaked at her elbow. She started, and then laughed. It was Pedro, the parrot Dom Benito had sent her

manners, and he bowed—very fine in his scarlet and lace. "Lady," he said, "is this your bird that has been after rousing me, like God's angel on Judgment Day?" Jacinth nodded.

"Then I bless him indeed, for it's to a sight from Heaven that he's waked me."

Jacintha smiled again. She only understood the half of what he said, but his gaze was more flattering than any spoken compliment. She showed him the cage door. "Bird fly away. I let him go—free." There was a world of envy in her voice.

"Faith, then you'd better follow him."

"I? How? I not comprehend."

"You're no better off than the bird itself. Bars—cage." He pointed to the grille in front of her.

"Ah," she sighed. "It is true. I am—I am shut in, how do you call it?"

"A prisoner? That's bad." Nick frowned. He stooped and coaxed Pedro on to his wrist, smoothing his feathers tenderly, as if they had been the soft hair of a girl. "Little dark lady," he said, "why are you shut in? If it's help you're wanting—a handful of gold, or a man killed—Nick Thorp is here to do what you will."

He was kind; his voice comforted her and set her at her ease. She had never before talked alone with a gentleman; indeed, except for her father and her confessor she had not exchanged ten words with one. Yet here was she chattering to a stranger as if he had been Dolores or

small hands gestured, and her eyes flashed as she neared the climax of her story.

"Would you believe it? So now they wish me to marry, and I have no desire for marriage. To-night I am to see my betrothed." And at the thought of this horrible encounter, Jacinth dropped her head into her hands and sobbed aloud.

Nick had kissed tears away before now, but they never ceased to trouble him, and since these were beyond the reach of his comforting he found them doubly distressful. "Lady, little dark lady, dry your bright eyes, for I can't endure to see the tears in them. Faith, I wish I had Polly's wings and could fly up beside you. I can see well it's a hard thing to be born a girl when you have the high heart like yours, but there's things made can have that soldiermen lack—fears, and food, and a snug place to live in."

But Jacinth would not be comforted. "I want none of them. I'd rather be a gipsy. It is horrible to be married—I am afraid."

Nick had held a poor opinion of matrimony himself, and could offer her little comfort. "Maybe when you see this lad your father's chosen for you you'll think differently." He made the suggestion half-heartedly, and was glad to get a shake of the head for an answer.

"I think I shall hate him—now," Jacinth sighed. Nick looked up quickly, but she had slipped away from the window. She returned in a moment, her finger on her lips. "I hear the carriage at the other gate. You must go. Can you give me Pedro? Aunt Isabella will

"Lady," he said, "is this your bird that has been after rousing me, like God's angel on Judgment Day?"

aunt from Goa. He was the only bird of his kind in Campo Mayor, and greatly prized by his owner. Poor Pedro, he sat hunched on his perch, and Jacinth, moved by a fellow feeling, swooped down on the cage, unfastened the door, and ran with it to the window. "There, away with you!" she cried. But Pedro regarded the road to freedom with a suspicious eye. He climbed down from his perch, and balanced his green body doubtfully in the open door. Jacinth gave the cage a shake, and Pedro toppled out. His blundering flight carried him close to the sleeping Nicholas. The whirr of wings came through Nick's dream like a volley, and he leapt to his feet with an oath, his hand searching wildly for his sword. "Mother of God—" he cried.

Someone laughed—a clear, gay laugh, that was like a hand running over the strings of a harp. He looked up and saw Jacinth smiling between the bars of the window. He stared so long, saying nothing, that she blushed and lowered her white eyelids. This made Nick mind his

Lina, only his stiff language hampered her, and she reverted to her own liquid, purring Portuguese.

"Comprende o Senhor (Do you understand)?"

"Yes, I mind what you say well enough, though I can't get my tongue round the lingo myself."

"Good. Then I will tell you why I am sad. Is it not enough to make anyone grieve, even if they are fifteen, to be kept indoors on their birthday. . . . And Jacinth, who had never before had such a sympathetic listener, poured out the long tale of her grievances. Her

be angrier than ever if she finds out. I was a fool to let him go, but—" her eyes gleamed mischievously behind wet lashes, "I am glad I did. . . ."

A vine twisted up one side of the high wall. Nick was resourceful—his Colonel had told him so; therefore, regardless of his finery, he set his foot in a crotch of the stem, and swung himself up, the squawking bird's claws tangled deep in his silver lace cuff. He scrambled under the window close to where Jacinth's small lovely face glowed behind the grille. As he thrust Pedro through the bars their hands touched. Jacinth

whispered confusedly: "You must go, Senhor. Thank you ten thousand times. Ah, there is blood on your finger, did the wretch bite you?"

"Don't trouble yourself for that, it's no more than a drop and I'd shed it all willingly for you." She seemed so young and defenceless that a vast tenderness filled his heart. "Don't forget," he stammered, "I'm your friend, ready and proud to help you, whatever your need. When'll I see you again? I must hear what you make of this bridegroom fellow."

"To-morrow, I go to the Church of Santa Maria in the evening. Adios."

He ducked swiftly, hearing the door open inside the room. Then, climbing down the vine he snatched up his plumed hat and was through the gates before Senhora Isabella called her niece away from the window.

"If she doesn't fancy him," said Nick to himself as he swaggered along the road, "I'll be damned if I don't ask for her myself." And amazed and delighted by his own decision, he began to sing as lustily as a mating robin.

In the house of Dom José Cherito the wax tapers in the silver candlesticks shed their light on a notable company. All the gentry of the neighbourhood were crowded, greedy, inquisitive, and decked in their best, round the long table which upheld the betrothal feast. Jacintha's gown of white brocade, sprigged and ribanded with green, cascaded over her chair. Pepita had laced her over-tightly into her satin stays, and she felt half-suffocated. She sat mute, her eyes on her plate, whilst her thoughts seethed in a tumult of fear and anger. Ten minutes before, when she had waited outside the door for her father to summon her, her misgivings had been almost forgotten. Pepita's flatteries, Dolores' gasps of envy—the jewels, the new gown—all these had woven a spell

"Thank you. I am not hungry."

"Ah, but even the flowers must drink dew, otherwise they would lack honey for their bees. I am a great lover of honey, Senhorita."

"Indeed, Senhor."

"Yes; and when I suspect there is sweetness in a flower I will pay a great price for it. You are like a camellia, a white camellia in bud, with petals very closely furled."

Jacintha stayed silent. At Lina's wedding she and Margherita had worn wreaths of white camellias.

"It is a most beautiful flower, the texture is so soft, so smooth—like a young girl's skin. One is filled with a desire to touch it."

He leant closer to her; under the fall of lace table-cloth she felt his thigh press against her skirts. She drew away, pulling at the brocaded folds with a quick gesture and an angry flash of her dark eyes. Dom João laughed softly. This was better than he had expected. Women had either lavished favours on him or yielded to him with terrified acquiescence. It would be amusing to tame a creature of spirit. His hand groped and closed over her wrist. She tried to pull it away, but his supple fingers gripped her flesh, and she felt trapped—helpless.

The dinner was nearly ended when there was a stir amongst the guests, a craning of necks, and a pushing back of chairs. The gipsies had been summoned to entertain the company. They ranged themselves at the end of the room—a tawdry group, with scarves of red and yellow, and flaring pink shawls. The guitar strings thrummed, and their voices rose in a wailing chant. The melody was full of harsh beauty—the beauty of desolate landscapes, of storm and wind. Jacintha lifted her tired head. The gipsy music—the music of a free people—rang in her ears. Her mother had been of this race who would suffer no bondage, who loved and roamed where they pleased, and for a second time that day



"Sir!" snapped Dom José, "I am more concerned with the recovery of my daughter than the wardrobes of your blackamoors."

about her. Then the door had opened, and Dom José led her into a crowded room. Someone had bowed over her hand, she felt a moist kiss, and quickly withdrew her fingers. It was Dom João. He towered above her—Lina's ogre, Dom João, Conde de Evora, the richest man in Algarve. He took the place next to her and, bewildered, Jacintha stole a glance at him. He was very fine, she noticed, as if he had taken pains to look his sumptuous best. His huge body was cased in pomegranate velvet, there were diamonds in his cravat, and the hair framing his handsome, sensual face was unpowdered and curled in the newest French fashion. Then, as the significance of all this splendour, of his compliments, of his presence beside her, dawned on Jacintha, she felt cold, and sick, and frightened. Not Dom João! Surely her father would never give her to Dom João. Why, they said . . . they said . . . and all the whisperings she had ever heard about him swarmed in her mind like blowflies. Fascinated, she watched his strong fingers as they tore at his bread, disembowelling a roll with one swift movement, and with a shiver she remembered the bruise on Lina's neck.

"The Senhorita does not eat. Permit me." The fingers broke off a bunch of grapes and set them on her plate.

a song stirred Jacintha's blood. She remembered the gay voice under her window.

"Oh, it's mount my heart and ride. . . ."

Well, so she would, and ride anywhere to escape from Dom João and his hot, cruel hands. Her friend, the soldier, said he would help her; yes, he had promised. . . . A clash of cymbals interrupted her wild plans; the music had ended, and the serving men were hastening to refill the glasses.

Dom José, with a thin-lipped geniality, announced the betrothal of his daughter to Dom João, Conde de Evora. He toasted his future son-in-law, and praised an alliance which should unite their two illustrious houses.

Then Dom João, slipping his hand under Jacintha's elbow, forced her to rise and stand beside him as he made a reply to her father's speech. He acknowledged Dom José's praises with suave condescension, and swore that all the good fortune was on his side. "You do well to envy me, gentlemen," he cried. "I dare swear few of you have been so blessed. A beauty, well dowered, and a virgin. Why, the devil himself could demand nothing better. Come, pledge me, and since kisses and wine

(Continued on p. 50.)

"I N later times," writes Sir James Frazer, F.R.S. (in his "Folk-Lore in the Old Testament," published by Messrs. Macmillan), "Jewish fancy tricked out the story of the flood with many new and often extravagant details, designed, apparently, to satisfy the curiosity or tickle the taste of a degenerate age, which could not rest satisfied with the noble simplicity of the narrative in Genesis. Among these tawdry or grotesque additions to the ancient legend we read how men lived at ease before the flood. . . . It was this easy, luxurious life that led men astray and lured them into the commission of those sins which excited the wrath of God. Yet, in his mercy, he gave them due warning ; for Noah, instructed by the deity, preached to them to mend their ways, threatening them with the flood as the punishment of their iniquity ; and this he did for no less than one hundred and twenty years. Even at the end of that period God gave mankind another week's grace, during which, strange to say, the sun rose in the west every morning and set in the east every night. . . . But nothing could move these wicked men to repentance ; they only mocked and jeered at the pious Noah when they saw him building the ark. He learned how to make it from a holy book, which had been given to Adam by the angel Raziel, and which contained within it all knowledge, human and divine. It was made of sapphires, and Noah enclosed it in a golden casket when he took it with him into the ark, where it served him as a time-piece to distinguish night from day ; for so long as the flood prevailed neither the sun nor the moon shed any light on the earth. . . . The holes in the sky by which the upper waters escaped were made by God when he removed two stars out of the constellation of the Pleiades ; and in order to stop this torrent of rain God had afterwards to bung up the two holes with a couple of stars borrowed from the constellation of the Bear. That is why the Bear runs after the Pleiades to this day : she wants her children back, but she will never get them till after the Last Day. When the ark was ready, Noah proceeded to gather the animals into it. They came trooping in such numbers that the patriarch could not take them all in, but had to sit at the door of the ark and make a choice ; the animals which lay down at the door he took in, and the animals which stood up he shut out. Even after this principle of natural selection had been rigidly enforced, the number of species of reptiles taken on board was no less than 365, and the number of species of birds, 32. No note was taken, at least none appears to have been recorded, of the number of mammals, but many of them were among the passengers. . . . One creature, the *reem*, was so huge that there was no room for it in the ark, so Noah tethered it to the outside of the vessel, and the animal trotted behind. The giant Og, King of Bashan, was also much too big to go into the ark, so he sat on the top of it, and in that way escaped with his life. With Noah himself in the ark were his wife Naamah, daughter of Enosh, and his three sons and their wives. An odd pair who also found refuge in the ark were Falsehood and Misfortune. At first Falsehood presented himself alone at the door, but was refused

roof. Though the lion suffered the whole time from a fever, which kept him comparatively quiet, yet he was very surly and ready to fly out on the least provocation. Once when Noah did not bring him his dinner fast enough, the noble animal gave him such a blow with his paw that the patriarch was lame for the rest of his natural life, and therefore incapable of serving as a priest. It was on the tenth day of the month Tammuz that Noah sent forth the raven to see and report on the state of the flood. But the raven found a corpse floating on the water, and set to work to devour it, so that he quite forgot to return and hand in his report. A week later Noah sent out the dove, which at last, on its third flight, brought back in its bill an olive leaf plucked on the Mount of Olives at Jerusalem ; for the Holy Land had not been ravaged by the deluge. When he stepped out of the ark Noah wept to see the widespread devastation wrought by the flood. A thank-offering for his delivery was offered by his son, Shem, for the patriarch himself was still suffering from the effects of his encounter with the lion and could not officiate in person."



ay little Shepherdesses
Come, come away,
Lightfooted follow me,
Follow my way.
Haste to see the heavenly King
Born on earth this blest morning.
Gay little Shepherdesses, come, come away, etc.
At His feet my gift I'll lay,
This merry pipe whereon I play.
Gay little Shepherdesses, come, come away, etc.
Behold I bring a goodly cake;
I this cheese as tribute take.
Gay little Shepherdesses, come, come away, etc.
Hush ye all, His small lips cling,
He takes the breast, our sweet Lording,
The little King.
Gay little Shepherdesses
Come, come away,
Light foot I pray;
Now sups the King.

Allon Gay, Gay, Bergères.

Allon gay, gay, gay, Bergères,
Allon gay, allon gay.
Soyez légères.
Suyvez moy.
Allon, allon, voir le Roy,
Qui du ciel en terre est nay.
Gay, gay, allon gay, etc.
Un beau présent luy feray,
De ce flageolet que j'ay,
Que j'ay tant gay.
Gay, gay,
Allon gay, gay, gay, Bergères, etc.

Un gasteau luy donneray
Et moy
Plain hannaplay offriray,
Gay, gay, allon gay, etc.
Ho! Ho! paix la, paix la! je le voy;
Il tette bien sans le doigt
Le petit Roy!
Gay, gay,
Allon gay, gay, gay, Bergères,
Allon gay, allon gay.
Soyez légères,
Le Roy boit!

We reproduce here a charming illuminated version by Ernest H. Shepard of an old French song, "Allon Gay, Gay, Bergères." It was written by one Guillaume Costeley, born in 1531, who was organist to Charles IX. and Henry III. until 1582. A large number of his works have been transcribed and published by Henri

Expert ("Les Maîtres Musiciens de la Renaissance Française"). This song, it is of interest to add in passing, was rendered at the "Festival of French Music" (12th to 20th Century) organised by Mr. Anthony Bernard, and given at the beginning of this year at the Queen's Hall.



Ma Mère, Hellas! Mariez-Moy.

Alack! my mother, marry me,
Since the Spring was made
for pleasure.

Child, such thoughts my heart dismay—
Alack! my mother, marry me.
Time it is to plant the may,
Life is short, and youth has leisure.
Alack! my mother, marry me,
Since the Spring was made for pleasure.

Ma mère, hellas! mariez-moy,
Puisque le temps est
à plaisir.

Ma fille j'en suys en esmoy—
Ma mère, hellas! mariez-moy,
El est temps de planter le may
Puisque nous avons le loisir.
Ma mère, hellas! mariez-moy,
Puisque le temps est à plaisir.

Here is seen another old French song, "Ma Mere, Hellas! Mariez-Moy," illuminated by Ernest H. Shepard. This song was written by Pierre de la Rue, who first appeared in 1477 at the Court of the Duke of Burgundy. The Dukes of Burgundy were extremely ambitious, and their Court in the century

preceding the break-up of their dominions was one of the fashionable centres of Europe. Pierre de la Rue was in the service of Philippe le Bel as Chapel-Singer from 1492 to 1510. He died in 1518 at Courtrai. This song was given in the same "Festival of French Music" as the one illustrated opposite.



"PIRATES"—BY NORMAN LINDSAY.

Children, and small boys especially, have as great a love for pirates as ever, and still enjoy the tales of their adventurings in the western seas. It is a taste that dies hard, for adult partiality for detective stories, though sometimes claimed as affording intellectual exercise, reveals at heart the same interest in subjects of a gruesome or bloodthirsty kind! That romance should have obtained its inseparable connection with a career as grim and sordid as the pirate's, discloses the schoolboy in us all. Terror is the keynote of Mr. Norman Lindsay's vivid painting of a West Indian settlement stormed by a villainous crew.





His father was sitting with his elbows on the table. Behind him, the figure of the boy's mother, lamp in hand . . . By the fire sat his elder brother, Branty, splitting logs . . .

THE SHEPHERD & A CHRISTMAS STORY.

By MARGUERITE STEEN,
Author of "Unicorn," "The Wise and the Foolish Virgins."

Illustrations by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.

YOU had your notice from Thornber, three months ago, hadn't you?"

"Ay," said John Crede; and he lifted his eyes from the crown of his hat, which he was turning round and round between his hands, and looked full in the face of the speaker, who shrugged a young, impatient shoulder.

"Well, Thornber has my authority; you can't say you haven't had time to look round for another place. Anyhow, the cottage is wanted from the thirtieth; I haven't any more to say. I've got other things on my mind at present, Crede."

John Crede stood alone by the gate, staring up at the windows which ran along the first-floor level of the long, old house. Now, at dusk, each held a rose of fire- or lamp-light; a familiar drama was enacting itself up there; shadows crossed the orange squares; once a woman, in a nurse's blue uniform, with white about her head, came to a window and drew down a blind. Up there, in comfort and in ease, new life was being born to Overmyre; another Applegate was struggling down the dark tunnel of birth into a world that waited eagerly for its coming; a world drawn to such a sharp point of anticipation and rejoicing that the intrusion of other affairs seemed like an affront. John Crede turned on his heel, and strode away into the gathering dusk.

They called it a cruel Christmas; people with fires that roared half-way up their chimneys, who could take refuge beneath their blankets from the rigours of the night and snuggle their shoulders in furs during the day time, spoke of it as "unkindly" weather. The east wind sliced across the marshes, and wild fowl lay, frozen to death, among the singing sedge; no snow fell, to cover with its tender mantle the suffering earth, but the black hedgerows stood petrified beneath their coating of rime, and the roads rang with the hardness of iron under the iron-grey bowl of the sky.

Across the frozen furrows of a field a short figure—the only moving object in the hushed landscape—pursued its indeterminate zig-zag from hedge to hedge; every now and then, as it followed its uncertain course, it would stoop and gather something into its hand; a mole, it might be, with piteous soft belly and little praying hands outspread in last supplication to its enemy the cold; or a bird with head awry, and tiny claws drawn up against the coldness of its breast; a dead field-mouse, and a hedgehog, did not escape the gleaner's tenderness. One after another, he popped their little bodies into his pockets, which bulged with his curious harvest; and presently, because he had the sense of time, he turned towards the path which led to his home.

The thinnest imaginable thread of smoke rose, white against a black background of coppice, from the tumbledown chimney stack, and an uncertain flicker of light, as from a lamp that is carried in someone's hand, crossed a window as Jamie approached, then vanished.

Suddenly he was aware of the piercing cold, felt sick with it; yet he was afraid to go in, because inside the cottage there was sadness. Jamie did not want to be sad; it was Christmas time, and at Christmas everyone is bound to be happy, for at Christmas the Saviour of mankind was born—and not mankind only, but bird-kind and beast-kind. That was why it was so important that to-day, which was the eve, he should go out and gather up all the little dead creatures, that no unseemliness

of death should darken a world that rejoiced in birth. It was what they would have wished, the little dead things, who had shared their happiness with Jamie; they would have trusted him to see that their little cast-off bodies were not allowed to disfigure with melancholy the happiest day in the year.

His father was sitting with his elbows on the table. Behind him, the figure of the boy's mother, lamp in hand, moved shadowy between larder and houseplace, getting together food for their tea. By the fire sat his elder brother, Branty, splitting logs; the hatchet rose and fell with mechanical regularity, catching each time a dull reflection from the feeble flames. How still they were; how sad! *Good Christian men, rejoice.* Jamie wondered whether, by some mournful accident, his father was not a good Christian man. He went to sit down quietly, opposite his father; no one took any notice of him.

His mother was the first to break the silence; her voice had a queer, splintery note in it, as if someone had dropped a china bowl and the bits went tinkling about the room. "Twelve year you've been shepherd here, and thirty year your father before you."

A log fell clattering from Branty's hand upon the hearth; he waited a moment before he spoke. "When have we to get out?" he muttered.

John Crede muttered something inaudible; his wife took up her plaint. "Forty-two years Credes have served him faithful. 'Twas a bitter sore enemy you made in Thornber, John. 'Tis the unrighteous triumph in the end. You'd best have let him be, and shut your eyes to things you couldn't alter."

"Ay?" said Crede bitterly. "Shut my eyes to plain thieving? 'Tisn't my way to ho'd my tongue when folks is being robbed, my lass."

Jamie's heart gave a little skip in his bosom. His father was a good Christian man. He knew that—he could not tell how he knew it, but it became plain to him as he looked across the table at his father's dour face. It was all right, so long as his father was a good Christian man. He said, in the curious singing voice which was one of the things that made people laugh at him—" 'Tis Christmas Day in the morning." He had a feeling that if everyone remembered this the care and sorrow would fall away from the house.

Branty rose from the fireside and came to the table for his tea. "Nice sort of Christmas," he muttered bitterly.

Jamie peered into the shadows. Always for Christmas there was a fine pile of holly; logs were piled high on the hearth, and for days beforehand his mother would have been baking—huge loaves of currant bread, a dumpling, fuller than usual of currants and raisins and bits of candied peel; and there would be a great round of beef, sent from the house, and oranges and pears to eat afterwards, when they drank the sweet and heady cowslip wine that was made every spring, and provocative of all sorts of gaieties and pranks among those who tasted it.

But to-night, look where he would, there was no sign of Christmas. He had heard his father and mother saying to each other that no money must be wasted this year, with dear knew how long to go before they found another home, and John another place as a shepherd. Had they forgotten, in all their grief, that to-morrow all men on earth were bidden to rejoice because a Child was born? Jamie felt troubled.



He sat stiffly on his heels, thrusting his hands under his armpits to keep them warm.

The wind shrieked and beat a volume of smoke down into the room; his mother coughed; Branty coughed and swore; John Crede sat motionless, as if unconscious of it. He neither ate nor drank; he was thinking of the sheep he had shepherded on Overmyre pasture, of the lambs he had helped into the world and cherished at his own fireside through stormy weather; of the shearings that brought each year a pleasant festivity. They said there was none handled the sheep as he did; instead of plunging and struggling when he took hold of them they seemed to submit trustfully to his handling. Snip-snap—and the heavy load lay on the ground, while the sheep, instead of rushing away in panic, stood for a moment in the sunshine, relieved, yet puzzled by the disappearance of its burden, pale and foolish-looking in its cream undercoating, and disposed to stay near the one who had handled it so skilfully. Neither of the boys had inherited his way with the sheep; Jamie—well, he was too little; and Branty was clumsy and butcherly in his handling.

And now, because of a man who had his own axe to grind; because of having a young master instead of the old one who had been the friend of them all, it was over. Credes were cast out from Overmyre.

"I never thought—" began the mother, and her words broke on a sob. John finished the sentence for her.

"As we'd have to go? I went on hoping, lass. I thought maybe he'd come to see fair, and tell me one day that what did for his father would do for him. But Thornber's got his ear, and that's the end on it. I went on hoping—but we was fools."

Branty Crede, with the blade of his knife driven deeply into the loaf as he spoke, said a terrible thing—"May the child that's to be born to him be driven out as we're driven out," he said, between narrowed lips. His mother gave a little cry; John Crede shook his head.

"Nay, nay; there's nought to be gained by cursing folk."

"It's Christmas Day in the morning," piped in Jamie; he said it hastily, superstitiously, as though the words carried a charm against ill-wishing.

His mother looked tenderly towards him; she had little time to pay much attention to this youngest son of hers, she thought remorsefully; and there were times when she could not understand him. "Daft

Jamie," the neighbours called him; and it had been a sore affliction to her and John that their second child should come into the world with only half his share of worldly wits. Yet it seemed, sometimes, to Mary Crede, that for the half that was denied him the good God had made amends by some mysterious gift that was beyond the understanding of ordinary-witted folk.

Branty, who was generally kind to his brother, growled, "Oh, shut up with your 'Christmas Day in the morning.' You'll be singing 'Here we go round the mulberry bush' next!" Jamie chuckled, because Branty's rare moods of unkindness never distressed him.

In bed, an hour later—because the fire had died down, and there was nothing to be gained by wasting fuel—he lay wide awake and pondered on the strangeness of this Christmas, when it seemed that the Christmas spirit had forsaken them all. He could hear the murmur of his parents' voices through the thin partition of the wall, and Branty, in the bed next to his own, was already snoring.

What had gone wrong with Christmas?

To Jamie, drinking in eagerly the only lessons which he could understand, the stories of the New Testament were a great deal more real than many of the happenings of every-day life. Because of this, he had felt, in his muddled fashion, which he had vainly tried to explain to Branty, that Christmas had a special significance for Credes. Credes were shepherds; and the first news of the first Christmas was brought to shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. Glory shone around. In the dark evenings round about Christmas, Jamie was always surreptitiously on the look-out for glory; he had a kind of idea that, having once appeared, it was bound to appear again, and that if it did, he, Branty and his father, would be sure to see it. He was equally positive that the sight would bring them all good luck—although what this good luck would amount to he could not quite imagine. Something to do with always having plenty of firing, and getting the cottage roof mended, and meat every day instead of once a week, and a big oilskin coat for his father, so that when he went out looking for sheep in a fog he need not get drenched to the skin. And luck for the sheep as

well; no more stumbling over rocks and broken legs, and no sickness among the lambs.

Every year he had begged his father and Branty to come out on the moor with him at night, and watch for the Sign which brought peace on earth and goodwill towards men; but they had always laughed at him, and bidden him not forget to hang his stocking up at the end of his bed before he went to sleep. This year no one had mentioned the stocking, and Jamie knew that if he were to hang it up, there would be nothing in it in the morning—no toffee-

apples, no marbles, no mouth-organ—Branty's wonderful gift three Christmasses ago. And he had not dared this year to mention going out on the moor, because his father looked so grim, and Branty, when he came up to bed, refused to talk at all, but turned his back and went to sleep as soon as his head touched the pillow.

Jamie sighed, as he thought of the sheep out on the moor, unshepherded. Suddenly his heart gave a leap, and he sat up in bed. What sort of a shepherd was he, to lie abed on Christmas night, when all sorts of strange and wonderful things were abroad? He was twelve years old, old enough to look after the sheep by himself; hadn't Branty allowed him, with Mist, the oldest and wisest of the dogs, to fetch the sheep all the way from the far pasture, and pen them for the night—that day in November when the snow fell suddenly, and his father and Branty were obliged to go right across the moors to round up the flock grazing up and down the steep and dangerous slopes of Ling Fell? Hadn't he counted them himself through the gate—Ickery, dickery, dockery—while Mist pounced softly on stragglers, crawled under the woolly bellies and even ran across the packed tableland of the sheep's backs to do his duty in answer to Jamie's whistle?

Jamie crawled carefully out of bed, fearing to wake Branty; the cold struck at his naked body, as he pulled on his trousers, tucked his nightshirt into their tops, and twisted his muffler round his neck, inside the collar of his jacket. How lonely was the night; how still! He had managed, without sound, to creep down the stairs, to open the door; and now he stood in the darkness, with the sky, pricked with cold, unfriendly stars, violet above him.

As he lit the ancient horn lantern which hung under the roof of the woodshed, Jamie's fingers trembled a little. To-night, as never before, it seemed vital that the miracle should happen; the miracle that should save them all. Like the candle-flame, his faith flickered a little; then, like the candle-flame, it straightened itself, and burned steadily upwards. He slung the lantern on a stick and shouldered it; that was the kind of thing that made people laugh at him. Whoever heard of anyone carrying a lantern *behind* them for light?

His footsteps echoed on the hard road; they sounded small and light, yet loud. Clap, clap, clap; they made the night seem emptier, brought

loneliness closer to the small boy as he took the upward-winding path to the fell. A hard black wind drove the clouds in banks in front of the stars, and threatened the lantern, through its broken horn panels, with extinction; his shadow leapt ahead of him in queer swollen patterns, like an attendant goblin. But a splendid feeling of importance and responsibility filled his body with a warm inward glow that seemed to render it insensible, after a little while, to the bitter weather. Daft Jamie. *Daft Jamie!* He chuckled to think that that was what they called him. It was part of a good joke which he shared with the rabbits and the hedgehogs and all the other gentle wood-folk who did not despise him or mock his ways. To them he was *wise* Jamie, the one who knew them and their habits and respected them, so that they accepted him as brother, and allowed him to pick them up and nestle them in his hand. The frozen hedgerows and the fields seemed filled with a mysterious and friendly rustling, as though all his little friends were watching, were joining him on his lonely pilgrimage.

He reached, at last, the bleak hillside, where the night wind raced, driving the sheep to shelter under rock and boulder. Jamie blew his lantern out; his heart thumped painfully against his breast-bone. The dry grass rustled against his boots, and he had to move carefully, often on hands and knees, for fear of dropping down some scarred rock surface. The lantern was a nuisance to him, and he left it where, in daylight, he knew he was bound to find it; at the foot of the old signpost which marked the moorland track to the village of Ling, on the farther side of the fell.

In the darkness he could see the eyes of the sheep turned towards him like tiny amber lamps; he could hear them about him, cropping the grass; a sheep coughed, and his heart stood still. It was so like the cough of a weary old man, who had lain down to die on the moor side. "Poor thing, poor thing," whispered Jamie, through chattering teeth; he stayed for a moment, crouching in a clump of bracken, until his limbs stopped shaking.

Close here, he knew, was the Slide; an old gravel pit, whose perilous mouth was guarded by wooden fencing. The stars shed a doubtful silvery light on Jamie, as he peered through the darkness. Last winter he had helped Branty to repair the fencing; it had rotted with the autumn rains; a sheep had stumbled, or pushed, against it, and had fallen through; the poor thing was discovered, with its neck broken, far down below, in the water that had collected in the rocky pit bottom.

He could just see the outline of the stakes, poking up against the sky; he blinked and stared again, getting used to the darkness. There was something—something—

The clouds piled themselves in front of the stars like masses of black rock; the wind moaned. Jamie crouched, waiting. Blow, wind, blow! It came over the moorland with an almost human scream; Jamie heard the heavy tottering footsteps of the sheep in the dark; frightened, they were galloping for shelter towards the rocks. The clouds moved on.

He crawled cautiously towards the Slide, not daring to stand upright, because the short turf was slippery as ice. Presently he knelt, shivering,

by the lip of the Slide. Was it the wind or the wet weather that had done it? For three yards or more the fencing, laboriously erected by Branty, was flattened over the dizzy mouth of the Slide; it fanned up and down, creaking, a death-trap for man or beast.

Jamie's fear left him. He knew what he had to do. He had meant to crawl to a little hollow he knew of, there to lie, sheltered from the wind, and wait—until glory shone around. On the edge of the Slide the wind blew almost with the force of a tornado, but here must he remain, doing his shepherd's duty. He knew that it would be impossible for him to raise the fencing, even more impossible to fix it securely in place again. There was nothing for him to do but to stay there, to guard the sheep from the danger that threatened them.

He wished he had put on Branty's coat over his own. He sat stiffly on his heels, thrusting his hands under his armpits to keep them warm. The thought of the pit there, within a few feet, turned him a little sick, but he fixed his mind on the miracle and his eyes upon the doubtful stars. It must come; glory must shine around to-night; glory that should mean that they were all safe, that his father and mother should have no more grief, that they should not be sent away from Overmyre, that the sheep should not fall over the Slide, and that he should not freeze to death in the dark night. *In the fields with their flocks abiding...* Here he would wait, a shepherd among his sheep, for the Sign that had been given to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. A great light in the sky, and voices singing—"Peace on earth, goodwill towards men." Goodwill even towards Thornber, who had turned them out of their home; goodwill towards people who had no thought for years of faithful service—

His foot had gone to sleep; he twisted, altering his position. Oh, that was more comfortable. And one might tear up some bracken, and pack it round one. Jamie, leaning back on his bracken pillow, began to experience a pleasant stupefaction, a dulling of the senses. . . .

John Crede woke with a start; someone was shaking his shoulder. It was Branty; his face looked queer, looked scared in the light of the candle he carried.

"Where's our Jamie? He's gone—he's not in bed."

Then minutes later the three of them were out on the lane; their voices cried Jamie's name into the darkness. Terror was on all of them, a terror that eclipsed their misery. John Crede spoke kindly to his wife: "We'll go and seek him. You'd best be putting yourself to bed again, lass; you'll get sick—"

His words broke off; for down the lane came the sound of hurrying feet, stumbling feet. Into the range of the lamplight from the open door came Jamie—but a strange, distraught Jamie, with eyes ablaze in the pale mask of his face. It seemed for a moment as though he could not speak; he waved his hands, his lips twisted and emitted uncouth sounds. Mary Crede ran towards her son and put her arms about him.

"Jamie—Jamie, my son; what's happened ye?"



. . . a strange distraught Jamie with eyes ablaze in the pale mask of his face.

He shook in her arms like a little sapling in the wind. "Glory! Glory shone around!" he got out at last; he struggled to be free of her clasp. "'Tis there now—the light as the shepherds saw at Bethlehem! 'Tis up there—ye can see it from the fell! I come to fetch you—all of you! Everything's all right now—the Saviour of mankind's born! Come on, quick, all of ye—we got to get to the Glory!"

"Hush—hush; ye've been asleep—ye've dreamt it——"

"'Tis the light—the light itself! I've watched for it year after year—I knowed I'd see it at last! The light as shepherds see."

"He's sick!" cried Mary Crede, trying in vain to hold Jamie, who was shouting, wringing his hands, weeping and clutching at his father's coat. God, make them understand! Make them come! His voice went on and on, out of his control, on its high, piping note. They never listened to him—Daft Jamie! But to-night they must—they must!

Half-dazed, but driven, despite themselves, by Jamie's frenzy, the three Crede's stumbled along the dark lane that ran uphill towards the fell. He ran ahead, skipping, dancing, waving his hands. Mary Crede sobbed as she walked, clinging to the arm of her husband. Suddenly he stopped dead, she felt him stiffen. He lifted his free arm to point at the sky.

"Sithee!" His voice croaked uncertainly.

The dark canopy of night was tinged with a roseate splendour that extended lilac to the very arc of the zenith. Mary gave a little cry; her limbs trembled. Branty, after an incredulous glance, broke into a shambling run after his brother. The edge of the moor was reached; the red had turned to flame. Branty leapt up on a rock to see better, stood for a moment silhouetted against the incredible light. His mocking laughter beat down upon the heads of the others.

"What is it, Branty—Branty?" cried Mary, who had fallen on her knees.

"Good old Jamie! He's seen his great light sure enough!" Branty's body doubled itself in bitter mirth. "To think we never thought of it—none of us! Where's your wits, Dad? 'Tis the bonfire they was building all the week to let rejoicin' Overmyre know as a child—young master's child—is born! The Saviour o' mankind! Eh, Jamie, you've had a rare laugh of us this time!"

Jamie's face, uplifted, was very white; something had gone wrong; the joy, the shattering joy which had penetrated his soul turned cold; he, too, trembled now, leaning against the rock.

Branty jumped down, heavily. "Getting folk out of bed for that much!" he grumbled, "Come on, mother. You'll not be walking over to the house, Dad, to offer your congratulations?" He spat on the ground. "A grand time they'll be having, Thornber and the rest; all the inner gang a-drinking healths an' Merry Christmassing themselves!" His voice was like a knife-edge, for Branty could remember old master's day, when rejoicing at Overmyre meant the rejoicing of every man and maid on the estate. In old master's time the lighting of the bonfire would have drawn every soul across marsh and fell to clasp hands and share a common delight.

John Crede turned his head away, looking down the dark lane. "'Tis rough going downhill for ye, Mary; maybe we'd better get over the wall and go back along highroad?"

Silently the four scrambled over the loose stone wall; the flame of the bonfire leapt the sky, rushed dizzily upward as though someone had flung oil on it, subsided once more to a ruddy glow. They tramped along the highroad, their feet ringing on the hard road-metal; heads down, a sad little company, whose silence was only broken by the recurrence of Branty's bitter mirth.

"The Saviour of mankind! That's a good 'un, that is! Glory shone around! Oh, ay, Jamie, ye've got the laugh of us this time!"

Jamie lagged behind the others; the darkness of the night was as dawn to the darkness in his heart. Once again the Sign had failed him. His brain felt muddled—there was something he ought to remember—ought to remember. A great double fan of light, chasing them along

the road, picked up their dark, trudging figures. Ahead was a gate; John moved forward to open it, as a car drew level.

Simultaneously they recognised it—the Overmyre Rolls, driven by the young master himself. Branty darted a look of sore resentment at the slim, lank figure, slouching over the driving wheel. He'd have seen the car and the gate smashed to pieces before he'd have opened for him!

As John pushed the gate open, the great car nosed forward impatiently. Lit by its headlights, John took off his cap and stood bareheaded.

"'Twill be a happy Christmas for you, Sir," he said; Mary murmured something at his elbow. Jamie, attracted by the light, edged up towards his father.

Young Applegate's head came curiously through the window. "Who the—? Oh, it's you, Crede. Oh, yes, by Jove. They telephoned me half an hour ago. It's a boy—an heir to Overmyre!"

Doubtfully, cap in hand, John Crede held out the other. "Maybe you'll let us be the first to congratulate you, Sir," he said gravely.

"What's that? Oh, yes, by Gad. Thanks, Crede—and Mrs—?" Mary's hand had reluctantly followed her husband's. "Didn't expect to see anybody about this hour of the night. We weren't expecting, you know—for another day or two—"

"I'm sure I hope all goes well with the mistress," murmured Mary, with bent head.

"Oh, yes—and all that—"

There was a silence. They heard him clear his throat. "Christmas baby—ought to be lucky, what? Well—happy Christmas to you all, and—er—Crede—h'm—have a talk with you to-morrow—perhaps—celebrate the occasion—no need to make a change just yet—what?"

The car roared forward. "Oh—John!" whispered Mary.

A bursting gaiety welled up in Jamie's heart; he knew—he could not tell how—that things had somehow come right; he knew—he knew—and there was something he ought to remember—

Branty's hand smote him suddenly between the shoulders. "By Peter! If old Jamie's not right after all—sometimes!"

"'Tis Christmas Day in the morning!" piped Jamie; and suddenly that which he had forgotten came back into his mind. "An' Branty—the fence round the Slide's broken down! I been keeping the sheep out of it all night."

Another roar went up from Branty. "I'm donged! D' you hear that, Dad? Come on—we must go and fix fence up—or they'll be saying there's none but one shepherd among the lot of us—an' that's Daft Jamie!"

[THE END.]



Branty leapt up on a rock . . . His mocking laughter beat down upon the heads of the others.



WHEN JESUS WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDAEA IN THE DAYS OF HEROD THE KING



BEHOLD there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him.

When Herod the King had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them, where Christ should be born?

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the Princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently, what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."



ST. MATTHEW. II. 1.
ST. LUKE. II. 15.

When they had heard of the King, they departed: and lo, the star which they saw in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned of a God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said, one to another,

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.



"LET US NOW GO EVEN UNTO BETHLEHEM."

A CHRISTMAS DIP INTO THE "ODYSSEY."



ODYSSEUS AND THE SIRENS.

From the Picture entitled "Off the Albanian Coast," by S. H. Sime. (Copyrighted.)

*I browsed among my books at Christmastide,
And, dipping into Homer's antique tale,
Came to that island where, in flowery meads,
Moulder'd the bones of seafarers beguiled
By sorcery of song. So, musing there,
Like him that on the bridge at Coventry
Dream'd of Godiva, I essay'd to turn,
In lame hexameters, a story told
By wise Odysseus to Alcinous:—*

Swiftly the well-built ship hove nigh to the isle of the Sirens,
Sped by a prosperous breeze; which soon on a sudden subsiding,
Flat calm fell, and the waves were still'd at divine
commandment.

Swarming aloft my company went, and, furling the canvas,
Stowed it below in the hollow hold: then, sitting in order,
Whiten'd the water with smooth pine-blades. Then I with
my sharp sword

Clave a great ball of wax, and, kneading with sinewy fingers,
Part with my hands' own might I softened it; part was
its melting

Wrought by Hyperion's son, King Helios, lord of the sunbeam.
When with wax I had seal'd my men's ears, one after other,
Me they bound, hand and foot, to the mast-stead, standing
there upright,

Then, having made all fast, sat and smote the gray sea with
their oarage.

Lightly the good ship sped; nathless, as we drew to the island,
Nigh as a shout might be heard off shore, the Sirens espied us
Urge our speed hard by; and, their dulcet voices upraising,
Sent o'er the sea sweet music entrancing. My soul was
desirous,

Hearkening, ever to hearken: "Unbind me, men!" I commanded,
Frowning upon them; but they bent hard to the oars and
rowed onward.

Then uprose Perimedes—Eurylochus also—and tied me
Faster in yet more bonds, and drew still closer the cordage.
So we drave; and at last, when faded the song of the Sirens,
Plucking the wax from their ears, my gallant comrades
unbound me.

C. E. BYLES.

("Odyssey," XII., 166—200.)

THE MERRY MONARCH AND THE "IMPUDENT COMEDIAN."

From the Picture entitled "Charles II. and Nell Gwynn," by Edward Matthew Ward, R.A. Reproduced by Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum. (Crown Copyright Reserved.)



"I walked with him (Charles II.) through St. James's Park to the garden, where I both saw and heard a very familiar discourse between (His Majesty) and Mrs. Nelly, as they called an impudent comedian, she looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and (His Majesty) standing on the green walk under it. I was heartily sorry at this scene."

Evelyn's Diary, March 1, 1671.



AFTER WORCESTER FIGHT.

Worcester fight is lost and won :
 Cavaliers ring many a knell :
 Where is now the Martyr's son ?
 Ask the oaks of Boscobel.

Where is now that brave array
 Marching down by Severn side ?
 "Zounds! but was it yesterday
 Cromwell broke our hope and pride?"

Hunted from the field of death,
 On that grim September night
 Wounded men, who gasp'd for breath,
 Took their shelter where they might.

Warrior hurt to woman's heart
 Never yet appeal'd in vain :
 Hers of old the better part—
 Staying hunger, soothing pain.

Here, perchance, some lordly squire,
 Sick and spent, is glad to rest
 Hidden in a farmstead byre,
 While the housewife brings her best.

Hard it were, the battle o'er,
 Now by axe or noose to die !
 Will the Roundhead at the door
 Enter prying, or pass by ?

C. E. B.



JANE LANE: THE LADY WHO RODE PILLION BEHIND KING CHARLES, DISGUISED AS HER MAN-SERVANT, FROM BOSCOBEL, NEAR WORCESTER, TO SHERBORNE.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

Boscobel: THE TRUE TALE OF A ROYAL ADVENTURE.

By
ARTHUR BRYANT.

Author of "King Charles II."



THE KING WHOSE ROMANTIC ADVENTURES AFTER THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER ARE DESCRIBED ON THIS AND THE FOLLOWING PAGES: A CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT OF CHARLES II.

IN the year 1651 there were living in a remote part of Staffordshire—a wilderness of coppice and furze on the high land towards the Shropshire border—five brothers of the name of Penderel. They were pitifully poor, even judged by the humble standards of those days; "Living," as Father Huddleston, their priest, told Mr. Pepys in after years, "in the wood, having little farms there, and labouring for their living, in cutting down of wood and watching the wood from being stolen, having the benefit of some cow-grass to live on." They tenanted their land from Charles Giffard, a young Catholic gentleman, and, like him, they followed the old faith that had gone out of all but the remote parts

of England a hundred years before, and, like him, suffered many things for it. Like him also—though the shadow of Republicanism lay heavy on the land—they secretly espoused the cause of the exiled King, and their brother had fallen for his father, the old King, at Stow fight in Gloucestershire, six years before. The eldest of them, William, a tall man, lived with his wife, Joan, at Boscobel, a black and

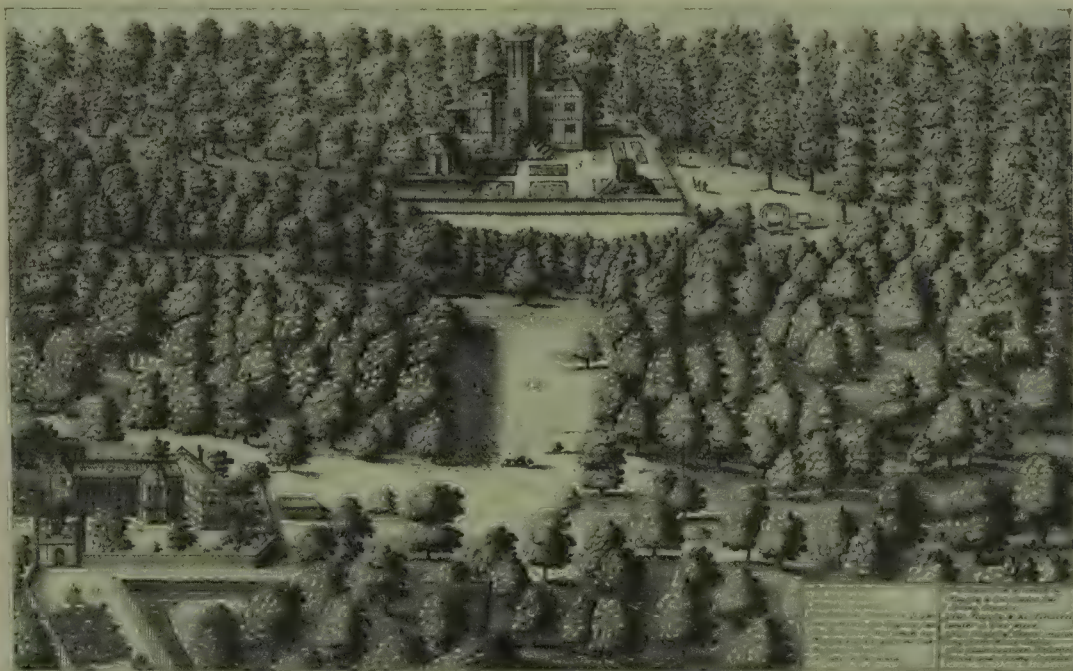
white hunting lodge of the Giffards, encompassed, in the old English manner, with outhouses, barns and hayricks, and beyond it and all about it the trees of Brewood Forest. A mile away lived the second brother, John, the woodward of Whiteladies, a ruined Cistercian monastery, belonging to the Giffards, inhabited and cared for by John and his younger brother George, an ex-soldier, and three other Catholic peasants. There was also Humphrey Penderel, the miller,

and a bachelor brother, Richard, who lived at Hobbal Grange, a cottage in the woods a little to the west of Whiteladies, with his aged mother. To these humble folk, the great world at Westminster, with its parliaments and revolutions and proclamations, seemed strangely remote. Their chief contact with the outer world was provided by Father Huddleston, a Catholic priest, who lodged with Squire Whitgreave at Moseley, a few miles away, and spent his days tramping the woods to visit his scattered peasant flock, taking his life in his hands to do so, it being death for a Roman priest to be found practising his calling in Puritan England. For this reason both Boscobel and Whiteladies

contained priest-holes, tiny apertures behind secret panels and under the floor-boards, where Huddleston and his like could lie, cramped and unseen, in days of search and peril.

Though news was scanty and uncertain in that remote place, the Penderels heard something that summer—they could scarcely fail to—of strange commotions in the world outside the woods. The young King, with an army

of ragged Scots, had marched into republican England to fight for his stolen throne; and the Penderels had seen their landlord, Giffard, ride off to join the barbarous northerners as they straggled through Tonge on the Worcester highroad that crossed the woods a mile or so to the west. A few days later a mighty and princely nobleman, the Earl of Derby, had come, bleeding and weary, to the door of Boscobel and begged



THE SCENE OF KING CHARLES'S ROMANTIC ESCAPE AFTER THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER, WHEN HE HID IN AN OAK-TREE FROM HIS PURSUERS: BOSCOBEL—HOUSE AND WOOD—AND WHITELADIES.

King Charles's adventure, where he saved himself by hiding from the Roundheads in one of the oaks of Boscobel wood, is illustrated in this engraving. Boscobel House is in the distance, and Whiteladies, a ruined Cistercian monastery, is in the lower left-hand corner.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Greville-Nugent.

shelter and a refuge from his enemies. They hid him in the priest-hole and learnt how he had been defeated in a battle somewhere to the north, and was now flying southwards to join his King at Worcester. Then he had left them and ridden out into the forest southwards, to conquer or die. The Penderels returned to their billhooks and scythes; they wished him well, but understood little of these things of State—they only knew that the villages beyond the woods were full of soldiers.

At about two o'clock in the early morning of September 4 George Penderel was awoken from his pallet bed in the gatehouse at Whiteladies by the voice of his landlord, Giffard, whispering to him from below. He looked down and, in the darkness, saw that the yard was full of horsemen. He called his companions and went down to them; then, opening the doors of the house, saw the tired faces of armed men lit by the flicker of the rush-lights within. Their leaders crowded around a tall, pale boy, with dark flowing hair and a buff coat and stained armour; they made way for him to enter, and he passed with Giffard and the noble fugitive who had sheltered at Boscobel a few days before into the little parlour beyond the hall. Giffard called for food to be brought—there was nothing in the house but a little bread and cheese and some sack—and ordered George to summon his brothers; a boy, Bartholomew, who lived there with his father, was sent scurrying out into the night to fetch them. Meanwhile George and John Penderel learnt from the waiting horsemen news of the fatal event that had brought them; how all the past day a bloody and terrible battle had raged at Worcester, thirty miles away; and how at evening the Scots, surrounded by Cromwell's iron redcoats, had broken in terror and were now flying northwards through the night. Then Richard and William arrived and were called into the parlour. As they entered, Lord Derby, motioning them to the tall young man with the dark locks, said: "This is the King; thou must have a care of him and preserve him as thou didst me." Bewildered and awe-stricken, they assented.

Scarcely knowing what they did, they brought at the bidding of these great ones some rough clothes of Richard's—an old threadbare cloth coat of green, a coarse noggen shirt, long loose-hanging breeches, and a stained, sweaty leathern doublet; these the King, doffing his own clothes, put on, crowning all with a grey steeple hat, mouldy with age and use, and without band or lining. Then they called to Richard to cut the King's hair; trembling greatly, the sturdy peasant did so, clipping those long royal locks with a pair of shears and a basin. Yet the young King's voice was reassuring; he laughed cheerfully and most humanly at Richard's embarrassed barbery, and suddenly put his hands up the chimney and blacked his face with them. Then the great lords and officers told Richard and his brothers that they were about to depart, for the dawn was coming and the enemy were close behind, and that they must hide the King in the forest. They rode off, and Richard, to whom this great task was entrusted, led his sovereign, now in the semblance of a poor woodcutter and bearing a woodbill, into a little wood called Spring Coppice.

Half an hour after the watching Penderels had seen their brother depart with the King, a troop of soldiers clattered into the courtyard of Whiteladies. The whole country was now alive with troops and all the grass roads through the woods were full of tired Scots, many of whom the local militia took as they slept. The newcomers closely interrogated John Penderel, who, as a Catholic, was a person suspect to the reigning powers, as to any fugitives who had passed that way; he, knowing that it would be impossible to conceal the presence of so large a party, admitted that some Cavaliers had visited the house and had ridden northwards an hour before. The Roundheads set off at once in pursuit.

Meanwhile Charles waited in the little wood with Richard Penderel. Here they remained, in a slight drizzle, all day, discussing plans of escape, while Richard instructed the King in his new rôle of yokel, "ordering his strait body and steps to a country gait" and teaching him, as best he could, the Staffordshire accent. But Charles, after five years' exile in France and one in Scotland, proved so bad a hand at the latter that it was agreed that he should keep his mouth shut if they were interrogated. As soon as it was dark, having decided to travel westwards in order to cross the Severn into Wales, Richard took the King to his mother's cottage, where old Mrs. Penderel, in an ecstasy of pride, laid before him a fricassy of bacon and egg, the highest delicacies her country state could afford. Then the two travellers set out, making their way precariously through undergrowth and over streams and fences. That night they suffered many adventures—pursuit by an alarmed and angry miller up a steep and muddy lane till they could run no farther and were fain to throw themselves breathless and despairing into a ditch; footsoreness that left the King's feet bleeding and lacerated; and, worst of all, the discovery that all the passages of the Severn were watched and that further flight westwards was impossible. All the following day they lay hidden in a hay-mow at Madeley-on-Severn; then, at nightfall, set out for Boscobel, travelling with sad thoughts by the same devious ways by which they had come.

Early on the Saturday morning William and Joan Penderel, by now growing accustomed to fugitives—another had arrived at Boscobel on the previous day in the shape of Colonel Careless, a neighbouring gentleman and leader of the royal rearguard at Worcester—were awaked by Richard, who told them of his failure to smuggle the King into the west. While Joan prepared a hasty breakfast of bread, cheese, and milk, the others, accompanied by Careless, went out into the wood to fetch



The Loyal Peasant who saved the King by giving him shelter at Boscobel House, and hiding him in an oak-tree and an attic: a portrait of William Penderel of Boscobel, hung by ribbon on "The Royall Oake."

Reproduced by Courtesy of Mrs. Hope-Nicholson.



WHERE KING CHARLES HID AT TRENT MANOR, NEAR SHERBORNE: THE RECESS UNDER THE FLOOR-BOARD IN A TINY ROOM ABOUT FOUR FEET SQUARE; SHOWING THE MASSIVE OAKEN INNER DOOR (BEYOND THE PANELS, WHICH, WHEN SHUT, FORM AN OUTER DOOR) LEADING TO THE ROOM.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Barnes.

the King. They found him where Richard had left him, sitting on a tree stump looking out wearily across the Shropshire plain on the Wrekin and the far Welsh hills. They took him to Boscobel, where Joan fed him and bathed his torn feet; then, as the sun was coming up and the house was certain to be searched, it was agreed that he and Careless should spend the day hidden high up in the hollow of a great ivy-grown oak that stood close to the highway which passed the house. Here was staged the most romantic episode in English history; the King of the land lying all day hid in the king of the wood,

"While far below the Roundhead rode
And hummed a surly hymn."

At one time the tired King, who had fallen asleep on Careless's arm, all but fell from the tree; at another the Penderels, who spent the day close by gathering sticks, contrived to pass some ale up to the fugitives

by means of a long hooked stick. After the Restoration the tree became the most famous in all England and was literally chipped to pieces by sight-seers seeking mementoes—people, as Evelyn put it, "who never left hacking of the boughs and bark till they had killed the tree"—though its successor, planted from an acorn of the original, still stands.

That night Charles slept at Boscobel, in a tiny recess beneath the attic floor, into which the curious can still lay their



JANE LANE'S SITTING-ROOM AT TRENT MANOR, NEAR SHERBORNE; SHOWING, TO THE RIGHT OF THE FIRE-PLACE, THE TWO SMALL PANELS THROUGH WHICH FOOD WAS HOISTED UP TO CHARLES'S HIDING-PLACE FROM BELOW.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Barnes.

bodies. Before he slept, after "Dame Joan," as he christened Mrs. Penderel, had waited on him, and as he sat sipping wine with his rustic companions in the garden, a peculiarly touching incident occurred.

Humphrey Penderel, the miller, coming in, told of a reward of a thousand pounds—vast wealth to such a one as he—which was being offered for news of the King's whereabouts. Careless, seeing Charles look troubled, assured him impetuously that, were the temptation a hundred times as great, the loyalty of these humble brothers was proof against it. Humphrey also admitted to being approached by a neighbour, who knew the King had been at Whiteladies two days since and who had asked for his present whereabouts to win the thousand pounds reward, but he had stoutly assured him, he added, that the King was now out of reach of his enemies and that anyone who now revealed that he had been in the neighbourhood would merely get hanged for his pains. "The Penderels have since endeavoured to mitigate the business

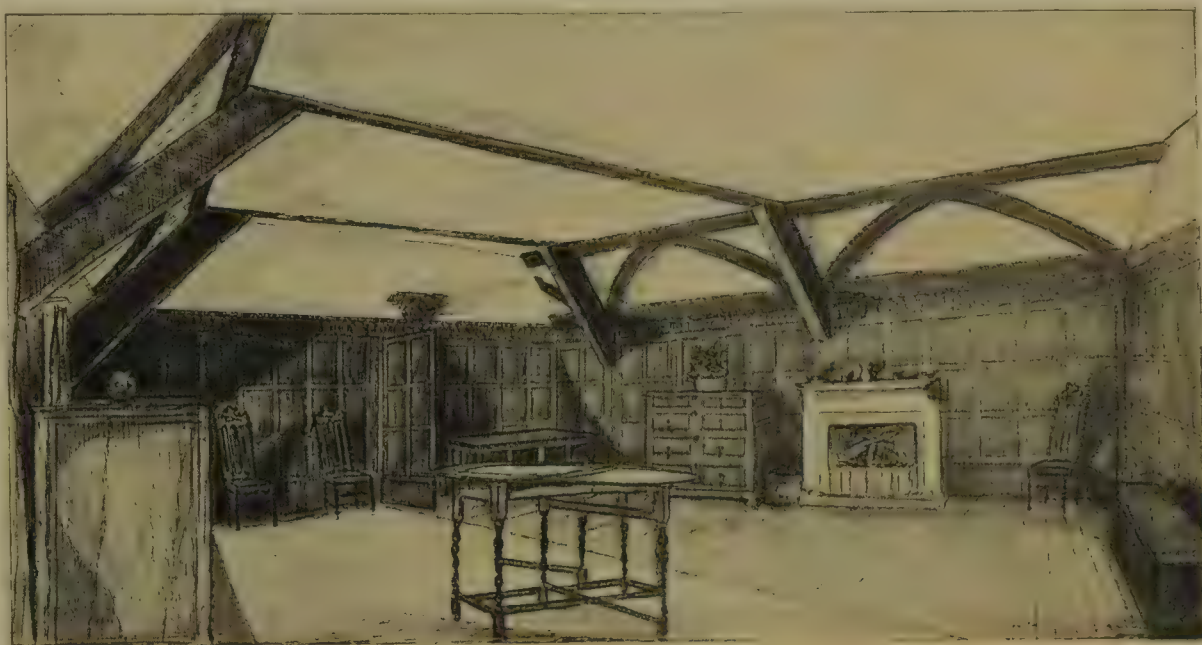


A CORNER OF JANE LANE'S SITTING-ROOM: THE ENTRANCE TO A SMALLER ROOM IN WHICH SECRET PANELS GAVE ACCESS TO KING CHARLES'S HIDING-PLACE.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Barnes.

of their being tempted by their neighbour to discover me," Charles told Pepys in after years, "but one of them did certainly declare it to me at the time."

The Penderels were so poor and the countryside so alive with searchers, that it was necessary to move the King speedily to some safer harbourage. On the night of Sunday, Sept. 7, the five brothers, armed with billhooks and ready to sell their lives dearly, escorted him through the woods to a Catholic house ten miles distant, where their good priest, Father Huddleston, had found a new hiding-place. A few days later, a way of escape was opened. The daughter of Mr. Lane, of Bentley,



TRENT MANOR, NEAR SHERBORNE, THE HOUSE OF COLONEL WYNNDHAM, WHO GAVE SHELTER TO THE KING TILL A BOAT COULD BE FOUND TO TAKE HIM TO FRANCE: A SKETCH OF JANE LANE'S SITTING-ROOM, WITH ITS WHITE FIREPLACE WHICH IS SHOWN IN THE PHOTOGRAPH ABOVE.

From the Drawing by Captain George Dudley. Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Barnes.

a Royalist squire, was about to make a journey to a friend's house near Bristol—a place where a ship to France might be obtained. She was to be escorted by a cousin, Cornet Lassels, and, for a part of the way, by her sister and

brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Petre. It was arranged that the King should join the party, carrying Jane Lane pillion and disguised as her servant.

With these new companions, Charles set out for the coast. Adventure of every kind befell him. At Bromsgrove, a few hours after leaving Bentley, his mare cast a shoe and he had to take her to the blacksmith, a strong Roundhead. "Have you heard any news of the Scots army?" that worthy asked him eagerly; "has the rogue Charles Stuart been taken yet?" Charles answered that he did not think he had been, adding that he sincerely hoped that, when he was, he would be hanged for having brought the scoundrelly Scots into England. Before the end of the first day's journey, the fugitives had a further alarm. Approaching Stratford-on-Avon, they observed a party of cavalry riding along the road before them. Petre, who had been whipped by the Commonwealth soldiers a little while before, was urgent to avoid them, and they accordingly made a wide detour. Picture their horror, when they arrived by another route at the gates of Stratford, to find the troopers occupying the only bridge into the town. But Charles was equal to the occasion. Calming Petre's fears, he rode boldly through the soldiers, who made way for him, courteously answering his salutes. Once in the town, the Petres rode off eastwards

Wyndham at Trent, near Sherborne. Here he remained for nearly a fortnight, living in a secret chamber above the kitchen, unknown to all but two or three members of a large household. His host meanwhile searched the south coast for a ship to take him to France, eventually finding one at Lyme Regis. The story of Charles's unsuccessful attempt to reach it, and the hairbreadth escape he made from his enemies at Charmouth and Bridport, is too long to be told here. After three days he returned to Trent, again defeated, and yet still, through the loyalty and courage of those to whom he had entrusted himself, secure.

A final effort proved successful. This time a Somerset cavalier, Robin Phelipps, and a Sussex squire, George Gounter, were the heroes. After a new removal to Heale House, near Salisbury, and a further week's delay, a coal-brig was chartered at Brighton to take the King to France. Just six weeks after the battle of Worcester, he crept at dawn on to the little vessel in a creek between Hove and Shoreham. Next day he landed in France.

Nine years later, those who had helped the King in his perils reaped a rich reward for their fidelity—all but Gounter, who was dead, and poor Francis Yates, who had supplied his sovereign with ten shillings, almost his entire worldly wealth,



King Charles the 2^d in Disguise riding before M^{rs} Lane by which he made his Escape; the Lord Wilmot at a distance. Clarendon Vol. 3. Pag. 450

"KING CHARLES THE 2^d IN DISGUISE RIDEING BEFORE MRS. LANE BY WHICH HE MADE HIS ESCAPE; THE LORD WILMOT AT A DISTANCE": FAITHFUL SUBJECTS, UNTEMPTED BY THE PRICE ON THE KING'S HEAD, AIDING HIS FLIGHT.

This engraving shows how Charles succeeded in fleeing to the south after the Battle of Worcester. Disguised as the servant of Jane Lane, the daughter of a Royalist squire, he journeyed thus unrecognised through a countryside alive with Roundheads.

From an Engraving by M. Van der Gucht. Reproduced by Courtesy of the Hon. Mrs. Greville-Nugent.

towards their home in Buckinghamshire, leaving Charles, Jane, and Lassels to continue their pilgrimage alone. That night they slept at the village of Long Marston, a few miles to the south.

Two days later, after a further night at an inn at Cirencester, the King and his guides, passing unsuspected through a whole countryside of seekers, reached the shelter of the Nortons' house at Abbot's Leigh. Here further adventures were in store for poorer Charles. Within twelve hours of his arrival, he had encountered no less than three members of the household to whom he was known. Happily, only one of these recognised him through his disguise, and that the butler, Pope, an old Royalist soldier. This man, though in lowly circumstances, which could have been at once exchanged for wealth had he chosen to betray the King, offered to run any risk to succour him. For three days, while Charles remained in the servants' quarters at Abbot's Leigh, he attempted, at the hazard of his life, to charter a ship for him at Bristol. When his efforts proved unavailing, he took upon himself the task of making arrangements for his departure for Somerset, where his faithful friends had found a new hiding-place.

Once more, Charles, with Jane Lane riding pillion, set out on his travels. After two days he came to the house of Colonel

and was hanged by the Commonwealth Government for having done so. The Penderels became for a moment the heroes of the nation. In the summer of 1660 they visited Whitehall, where they were affectionately received by the King and where their honest, reddened faces were much stared at by the fashionable folk at the Court; and the pensions with which Charles then rewarded them are still paid to their remote descendants. The sums in question, owing to the great change in the value of money since the seventeenth century, are not large, and even in times like these it is pleasant to think that the loyalty and devotion of these humble and faithful Englishmen are still commemorated.

As for Boscobel, it still stands in its sweet Staffordshire "wilderness," as perfect a specimen of an old country dwelling as any in England. The curious may visit it, climb its stairway, inspect its panelled rooms and hiding-holes, or sit where Charles sat supping his wine in the garden. Yet, to those with the historic imagination, it is perhaps best to be there when chill winter has bared the trees and opened the view to the west, and when north wind and snow have made a solitude again of that hallowed house where in former days the poorest of the English peasantry saved the English throne.

The Madonna and Child by Art



Raphael
(Raffaello Sanzio, 1483-1520)

The Madonna and Child in the



Filippino Lippi.
(Filippo Lippi, 1457-1504)

Painted by the celebrated Florentine Master

The Madonna and Child in the



Niccolò.
(1617-1688)

Painted by the celebrated Florentine Master

The Madonna and Child as yet



Sandro Botticelli.
The Madonna and Child as yet.



THE POWER OF THE GOD JUMLOO

By BARBARA BINGLEY.

Wood Blocks by LETTICE SANDFORD.

THE sunset turned the great walls and bastions of Fatehpur Sikri into a city of flame, the red sandstone became an almost transparent rose and gold, and the blue tiles crowning the turrets of the Gate of Victory were turquoises set in a triumphal diadem. I walked slowly up the paved slope of the Elephant Walk

leading to the gateway, and tried to imagine the army of the great King which had tramped over the very stones which my feet were touching. On the surface of the huge walls no block of masonry was displaced or chipped; the last of Akbar's masons might have left them the day before, so little had they suffered from the wear of centuries.

There was no sign of life anywhere; the shouts of the victorious army, the sound of elephant bells, the stamp of many feet, and the applauding voices had all gone, nothing remained but the undying stone, and the silence of inanimate things. Akbar was, perhaps, the greatest of all kings, I mused; certainly the greatest Emperor that India had ever known, and the riches and splendours which had been borne through the Gate of Victory probably surpassed those of every other age; yet, after so short a time as three centuries, how little remained of them. A few jewels, a picture or two, a crystal drinking cup, and all of them lying scattered in the museums of the world.

I watched the sunset fade, and then retraced my steps. At the foot of the Elephant Walk stood a twisted peepul tree, half hiding a little shrine which I had not noticed before. In the dusk a fire burned, and a feather of blue smoke rose between the dark leaves. Some holy man lived there, I supposed, and I did not envy him the company of those splendid ghosts which I felt sure must walk at night in the deserted city. The ground mist eddied in gray, clammy folds, and the loneliness was oppressive. I was glad when I came near enough to see a man crouching beside the crackling sticks, and to know that at least there was one other human being besides myself in Fatehpur Sikri. The priest rose and salaamed when he saw me. The firelight played on his greyish beard and saffron-coloured robe, lighting up a thin, intelligent face with sly, deep-set eyes.

"The mind of the Sahib was concerned with Akbar, the great King," he said pleasantly.

"That is so," I answered, surprised that he should have guessed my thoughts. "But how did you know, O Saddhu?"

"The curtains of the Sahib's mind were withdrawn, and I saw the picture which the Sahib had made—the horses and chariots, the elephants, and the riders—and the Sahib thought it grievous that no counterpart should remain of all these glories."

"Those were my thoughts, O Saddhu. I perceive you to be a man of wisdom. Do you also revere the memory of Akbar?" No man ever

had greater power, none dared thwart him, and he held the destinies of all Hind in his hand——"

"That is so, Sahib," he said, and added, complacently, "Nevertheless, one as humble as I—a poor Saddhu, brought him to distress and grief, and had power even greater than his."

"How did that come about?" I asked, seating myself on a root of the peepul tree. There were cooking pots among the strewn ashes, and the Saddhu's begging bowl, three-pronged staff and antelope skin lay by a bundle of bedding. He was evidently a wanderer, like myself, camping for a single night in Fatehpur Sikri. He warmed his hands at the fire and then began to tell a story.

"Sahib, there is a God in the high hills beyond Kulu whose name is Jumloo, and he is greater than all the Gods of Hind. No man has ever seen him, and it is forbidden to make his image in wood or clay or stone. Mallanna, the village of his people, is many marches distant. There

are but four men in all Hind who know of his greatness, for he does not care either for prayers or offerings, it being his wish to remain untroubled in his mountains. But I know, Sahib, for I have walked up the long gorge to Mallanna, where the boulders roll down at the bidding of Jumloo and crush those whom he will not suffer to visit his high places. Yea, I have walked on those cold hills, even as did the other Saddhu in the days of Akbar, the great King.

"Sahib, Jumloo is a rich God, and a charitable; to every holy man coming to Mallanna is given a piece of silver—four annas; and the priests of Jumloo are wiser than the Brahmins of Benares. Such a piece of silver was given to the Saddhu who visited Mallanna in the days of Akbar, and the Saddhu departed from the high hills and went down to the plain, where men were no longer free, but bowed themselves down before the King. In the plain were many tax-gatherers,



"Within those walls fear was born in the heart of him who had been fearless."

evil men, who robbed and extorted more than their just due from the people. Being Mussalmans, and men without reverence, they spared none—no, not even the Saddhu, who was an exceedingly holy man—and they took from him all that he had, the silver piece which the eleven priests of Jumloo had given him from out of the treasury of the God. The Saddhu was very wroth, and lifted up his voice, calling upon Jumloo. 'O great God,' he cried, 'wilt thou suffer robbery at the hands of these men? For is not this money thine, that has been wrested from me by the servants of the King? O God Jumloo, send a curse upon this Emperor that he may learn that the Gods of Hindustan are greater than the Sons of Timur.' The tax-gatherer beat the Saddhu, and abused him, but the folk of that village were kindly, and the Saddhu did not starve. But from that hour the King was stricken with the leprosy, and within those walls," his long arm pointed at the silent city behind us, "fear was born in the heart of him who had been fearless. There was weeping and dismay in the palace, for none knew whence the malady had come. The King called together all the wise men, and the Mullahs chanted charms, and exorcised devils, and the Hakims compounded rare drugs, and ground jewels to powder for medicine. But all was of no avail, for the King's evil spread—aye, spread more quickly than does the leprosy of common folk, so that all declared it to be a bewitchment. When despair had lodged itself in the King's heart so that he wept openly, there came to Akbar's bedside Birbal, his friend, whom he loved. And Birbal prostrated himself before the Emperor and said: 'Light of the World, in this land over which you rule dwell many Gods; call, I pray you, their priests and consult them, and haply they will know from whence this evil comes.' And Akbar, who was a wise King, hearkened to the words of Birbal, his friend, and ordained that the holiest priests and Saddhus should come and take counsel over him. So it was done, and yonder, in the Hall of Audience, the King sat on his throne and the wise ones were assembled before him. Amongst them was also the Saddhu, and when the King asked them if there was any there who could tell wherefore he had been stricken, the Saddhu rose and spoke, but, being a cautious man, he concealed his own name, and made the tale run as if the priest had died of hunger. The King was greatly troubled, and cried: 'What shall I do, O Saddhu, to make reparation to the God Jumloo?'

"Then the spirit of the God entered into the Saddhu, whose body became convulsed, and whose voice was changed into the voice of the God, so that all assembled cried: 'Wah, a miracle!' and fell on their faces. The voice commanded the King to return from his treasury the money which the tax-gatherer had taken.

"How can that be accomplished?' the King groaned. 'Out of the crores and lacs of my treasure, how shall men find a four-anna piece?'

"The course of thy malady shall be stayed for the space of twelve days.'

"Then the King caused a thousand men to be directed by the Saddhu, and they sorted the treasury, working both day and night, and the heaps of silver grew higher than the height of each man. On the last of the appointed days the silver piece was found, with the name of Jumloo magically engraved thereon. The King rejoiced, and summoned the Saddhu, first filling his hands with silver, and then demanding to know the will of the God. The Saddhu was once again possessed by the spirit of Jumloo, who commanded Akbar to go with his nobles and his servants up to the high hills to the village of Mallanna, and there give the silver piece into the hand of the foremost of his eleven priests. But Akbar begged that images of himself and his retinue might go with Birbal, his friend. 'For, O God Jumloo,' he said; 'How shall my great elephants climb up the narrow hill paths? And where in the high hills is there a camping ground big enough for all my tents?'

"Jumloo acceded to his request, and Birbal, guided by the Saddhu, departed for Mallanna, carrying with him images of the Emperor and his chief noblemen, all clad in rich silks, and adorned with rare gems, and also carven horses, camels, and elephants, with their harness and carriages. They travelled for many months, coming to Mallanna at the time when the first snow melts. A great ceremony was performed before all the people of Mallanna, and the images were laid on the stone of Jumloo, and from that hour Akbar was cured of his leprosy. Since then it is the custom in the village of Mallanna to lay the images on the stone every year in the season when the snow melts, so that the people may remember that their God is greater than the greatest of Kings. With these eyes I have seen it, Sahib."

"Thou art indeed fortunate, O Saddhu," I answered.

"Not altogether, Protector of the Poor," he said, and added slyly, "For although the Raj did not rob me of my four-anna piece, neither did it fill my hands with silver, as Akbar filled the hands of that other Saddhu who visited Mallanna."

I took the hint, and tossed a rupee

at his feet. Then, when he had salaamed, I went away. The last light had faded, and the city loomed black against the night sky. I stumbled along the path leading to my camping ground, and reflected on the power of priests and kings. The Great Moghuls had gone, but the Saddhus continued. A few dolls dressed in faded brocade, hidden in a remote hill village, are the only faithful representation of Akbar's court which remains to-day, but the Saddhu who described them to me is the exact counterpart of his predecessor, the Saddhu of Akbar's day, even to his rapacity. I shivered a little, and hoped that my rupee had been considered adequate recompense for the story-telling. I would have given much to visit Mallanna and see with my own eyes the eleven priests and the ceremony of the abasement of an Emperor, but leprosy was too high a price to pay for the privilege of incurring the wrath of the God Jumloo.

THE END.



"They travelled for many months, coming to Mallanna at the time when the first snow melts."



THE WANDERING SHEPHERD

By BARBARA BINGLEY.

Wood Blocks by LETTICE SANDFORD.



SPRING comes singing to the high Himalayas: she comes with the chant of the waterfalls set free from their ice-bound winter bondage, and in April the upland valleys of Kangra and Kulu are filled with the sound of rejoicing. The world wakes very sweetly in those high places. The great hills seem to stir under their coverlids of snow, and the whiteness of the drifts is magically changed into the whiteness of blossom, which, in its turn, weighs down the boughs of the fruit trees.

I had pitched my tent above a village, on a grassy slope where huge boulders crouched like benign beasts and sheltered me from the wind which blows over the ice-fields beyond Ladak. As I woke I heard a bird singing in the trees which clustered about the stone-walled huts below me. His song was clear and piercingly sweet, each note dropping through the air like the sound of a bell. *Kato lo pé, kato lo pé*, he sang. It was a strange, wistful call, and as I stepped out on to the dew-wet grass I determined to see the bird and learn his name. I stood watching the blue shadows of the clouds move across the far ranges, until I heard behind me the patter of dancing feet, and I turned to see a flock of sheep and goats come over the crown of the hill behind my tent. First came the sober black-faced sheep, with their lambs frolicking beside them; then the goats, with their shaggy coats and their sly yellow eyes; and last of all the shepherd, a tall old man with a kindly wrinkled face. He was clad in a single garment of grey wool girt about his waist with a girdle of goat's hair, and on his head he wore a pointed cap from which flaunted the bronze tail-feathers of the Minaul pheasant.

He came close to the tent and salaamed, and then, leaning on his staff, he watched me as I laid my fire. The wind blew gustily; my matches went out, and the green wood was slow to kindle. "If the Presence will permit," he said, "I will make the fire."

He squatted beside me and drew from a fold of his voluminous coat a little leather pouch containing flint and steel. He struck a spark and kindled the flame, using for tinder the silky dried leaves of the

everlasting flower. The flame leapt and crackled among the sticks, and, as he added more wood to the blaze, I noticed that he wore plates of hammered silver bound on to his wrists with threads of black wool. I asked if he had made them himself, but he shook his head.

"No, Protector of the Poor; they were my father's, and my father's father's before him."

"Were they all shepherds, even as thyself?"

"Yea, sahib. If the Presence will give leave I can draw milk from the queen of ewes. There is none sweeter in all the valley." My last tin of condensed milk was finished, and I was grateful for his gift.

"Wilt thou not remain, Shepherd, and eat with me?"

"Yea, sahib," he answered naively, "I will remain, for I have never seen the strange foods of the sahiblog." He watched me gravely as I broke eggs into a pan and began to fry them. Then he drew from the bosom of his garment a bundle containing, amongst other things, a couple of chupattis, which he propped against hot stones, piled to heat round the fire.

As we sat eating in companionable silence, there rose from the valley the four clear notes of bird song which I had heard earlier in the morning. *Kato lo pé, kato lo pé*.

"What is that bird, father?" I asked.

"Sahib, he is the shepherd bird, and once he was the guardian of flocks and herds, even as is thy servant. He calls to

his sheep: 'Where are ye, my wandering ones, where are ye?'"

"Has he never found them, then?"

"No, lord."

"There is a story?"

"Yea, there is a tale, and if the sahib wills it, I can tell him."

"Tell all; I am even as a child; I prize stories above silver." The old man folded his hands, and at the sound of his lifted voice the gentle beasts gathered closer about us, as if they, too, wished to hear the tale of the Shepherd.

"Long, long ago, before the Raj came to Hindustan, there dwelt in a valley not far from here a certain King. Many flocks and herds had this great one: a thousand rams, ten thousand ewes, and goats



"Here he watched his sheep, and made songs for the pleasure of the King's daughter."

innumerable. His pride and his pleasure was in them, and he loved his beasts more than his sons, more than his jewels and his wives, more even than his daughter, who was fairer than the flowering almond tree. Now there dwelt in a village nearby the King's palace a young man whose skill as a shepherd was very great. He could heal the ewes when they were sick; the lambs thrived under his hand; and at his voice the rams would cease their battling. Moreover, he could play upon a pipe of reeds and draw from it such music that all the folk marvelled to hear him, and the King's daughter most of all. She made known the skill of the shepherd to her father the King, and he sent for the lad. You must know, sahib, that it is our custom, when the first storms come, to drive our flocks up into the far places where the gods dwell and where no rain falls. The shepherd lad had knowledge of certain pastures where grew magic herbs, and, learning this, the King bade him take charge of the royal flocks. But the shepherd would not, though the King promised him many coins of silver and necklets of turquoise. Then the King bade him ask what he would, and the shepherd looked on the King's daughter, and saw her smile, so he begged her for his wife.

"The King loved his flocks and herds more than anything else in his kingdom; therefore he promised his daughter to the shepherd boy if, by the falling of the first snow, all the royal flocks and herds had returned to the village without the loss of even so much as one little lamb. Therefore the shepherd departed with a light heart, and the King's daughter watched him go. He drove his flocks for many days until he came to the highest pastures where the flowers grow between the snowdrifts, and there is rich grass which sweetens the milk of ewes, and causes the fleece of rams to grow so long that it touches the ground beneath their bellies. There the shepherd made a tent for himself, stretching his chadar between two great rocks, and here he watched his sheep, and made songs for the pleasure of the King's daughter, and dreamed of her smile when she should hear them. He made a thousand airs, and all day long he piped them, sitting under the grey rocks, whilst his sheep grazed around him. But, though his playing was sweet, it never ceased; no, not even in the noon-tide hour when the gods sleep in the high places. Wherefore, the Great Ones were angry, and they took counsel among themselves how they should silence the shepherd. And when they had disputed for a long while, Mandni spoke, he who is wiser than all.

"Oh, my brothers," he said, "do ye not know that when the hearts of men are heavy they make no music? If we cause a sorrow to fall upon this youth he will pipe no more; and we shall sleep again in the heat of the day. Let us take from him those flocks and herds which he loves, for then he will be silent and grieve."

"Therefore that night the gods caused a deep sleep to fall upon the shepherd, and Mandni, Dum, and Kutishwar came down from the high hills and drove away to a secret place all the flocks and herds. Not one did they leave behind; not even the smallest of the lambs remained

to comfort the shepherd. When he awoke and heard no sound he was amazed, but, thinking his sheep had only strayed to another valley, he was not troubled. But when all that day he had sought for them in vain, he wept, and he ran over the hills calling to them:

Kato lo pé, kato lo pé—where are ye, my wandering ones, where are ye?"

"He went from valley to valley and from hill to hill; but only the kite whistled and made mock of him, and there never came to his ears the sound of bleating lambs, of bells, and pattering feet. At last the gods took pity on him, and changed him into a bird, restoring to him the sweetness of his voice, and, even as the sahib has heard, he still calls his sheep; but, because the gods were compassionate, he calls without understanding, the sorrow having been taken from his heart."

"And what of the King's daughter?" I asked.

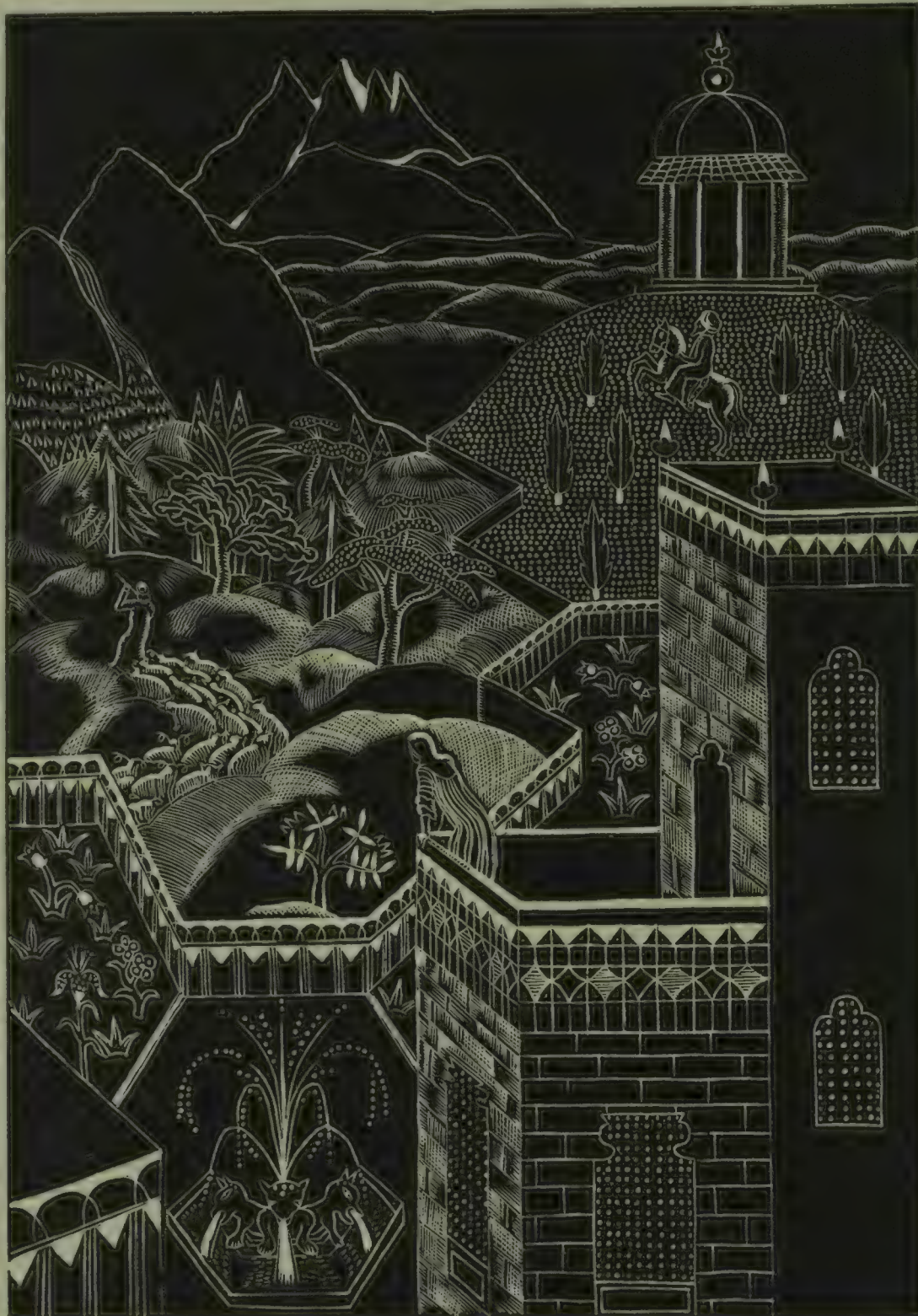
"Sahib, she waited through the winter listening to the up-braidings of her father. Then, in the spring, when still no word came from the shepherd, the King determined to sell his daughter and recompense himself in some measure for the loss of his flocks. The tale of her beauty had reached even to the tall towers of Delhi, and the Emperor Akbar Padishah sent his eunuchs to buy her for her weight in gold. But she stole away from her father's house, and went over the hills in search of the shepherd. She wandered far, and at last she came to the high pastures, and, finding his pipe beside a great rock, she sat down and wept. Mandni heard her lamentation, and beholding so beautiful a maiden, he clothed himself in the body of a man and stood before her. He wooed her, but she withstood him. Then he said very terribly: 'I am no man, but the Maker of all things; dost thou still refuse me what I ask of thee?'

"Then the King's daughter bowed before him and answered: 'Lord of all living, in the beginning didst thou not make two of every kind that they might mate each with its own, and rejoice in the spring? Thou art a god, and I am

a woman, wouldst thou break the law thou hast made? I seek my lover, suffer me to go, and if thou knowest where he is, I pray thee tell me.' Then Mandni, the maker of all things, found wisdom in her words, and straightway he turned her into a bird, and she flew over the hills to seek out her mate. The tale is told. Have I leave to depart?"

The old man rose with the unhurrying dignity of those who live alone in high places, salaamed to me, and then called gently to his flock. They ran round him, jostling each other, and their bells made a merry sound. The shepherd gathered up the weakest of the lambs in his arms, and disappeared down the hill. I sighed, for he had been pleasant company. But, though one shepherd had left me, the other remained, and as I heard him call "*Kato lo pé, kato lo pé*," I praised Mandni, Dum, and Kutishwar for their wisdom, and thanked them for having suffered the voice of the shepherd to remain, a wonder and a delight to all who travel in the high hills.

[THE END.]



"The shepherd departed with a light heart, and the King's daughter watched him go."

Famous Dreams: I.—Charles VI. and His Flying Hart.

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"THE FALCON CAME AND SET HER DOWN ON HIS FIST, AND THE HART FLEW AGAIN OVER THE WOODS."

For some of our past Christmas Numbers, that fine imaginative painter, José Segrelles, depicted scenes from "Don Quixote," Dante's "Inferno," and the music of Beethoven. This time his subject (here and on three following pages) is the interpretation of famous dreams. That represented above occurs in Froissart's "Chronicle," in a passage beginning: "It fortuned while the King (Charles VI. of France) lay at Saint Lyse (Senlis), on a night, as he lay in his bed asleep, he had a vision." He dreamed that he went hawking, but his falcon mounted so high and flew so far that he feared to lose her. "At this point" (we read) "the King thought that there appeared suddenly before him a great hart with wings. . . . And the hart did bear him over all the great woods and trees, . . . and in contentment the falcon came and set her down on his fist, and the hart flew again over the woods When he went into Flanders to fight with the Flemings, he took to his device to bear the flying hart."

Famous Dreams: II.—The Drowning Visions of Clarence.

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"THEN CAME WANDERING BY A SHADOW LIKE AN ANGEL, WITH BRIGHT HAIR DABBLED IN BLOOD."

This picture combines two phases in Shakespeare's famous description of a dream in "King Richard III." (Act I. Sc 4). The dreamer was George, Duke of Clarence (brother of Richard and of Edward IV.), then a prisoner in the Tower. He dreamed that he fell overboard from a ship and sank to the bottom of the sea, and he describes the strange things he saw in the deep. On the left he is seen sinking down through the water. The right-hand figure belongs to a later part of the vision, telling how he passed "The melancholy flood, With that grim ferryman which poets write of, Unto the Kingdom of perpetual night." Relating what he saw there, he goes on: "Then came wandering by A shadow like an angel, with bright hair Dabbled in blood; and he shrieked out aloud, *Clarence is come; false, fleeting, perjured Clarence, That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury; Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!* With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends Environ'd me about."

Famous Dreams: III.—Nightmares of Nero.

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"SURROUNDED BY IMAGES SET UP NEAR POMPEY'S THEATRE, AND HINDERED FROM ADVANCING FURTHER."

This picture is a composite representation of Nero's dreams as described by the Roman historian, Suetonius, in his "Lives of the Caesars." Here we read: "During his latter days, Nero was terrified with manifest warnings, arising from dreams, auspices, and omens. He had never been used to dream before the murder of his mother. After that event he fancied in his sleep that he was steering a ship, and that the rudder was forced from him; that he was dragged by his wife, Octavia, into a prodigiously dark place; and was at one time covered with a vast swarm of winged ants; and, at another, surrounded by the national images which were set up near Pompey's theatre, and hindered from advancing further; that a Spanish jennet he was fond of had his hinder parts so changed as to resemble those of an ape, and having his head only left unaltered, neighed very harmoniously." Nero is seen struggling amid the statues, below the shrouded figure of Octavia (whom he had put to death) bearing a torch.

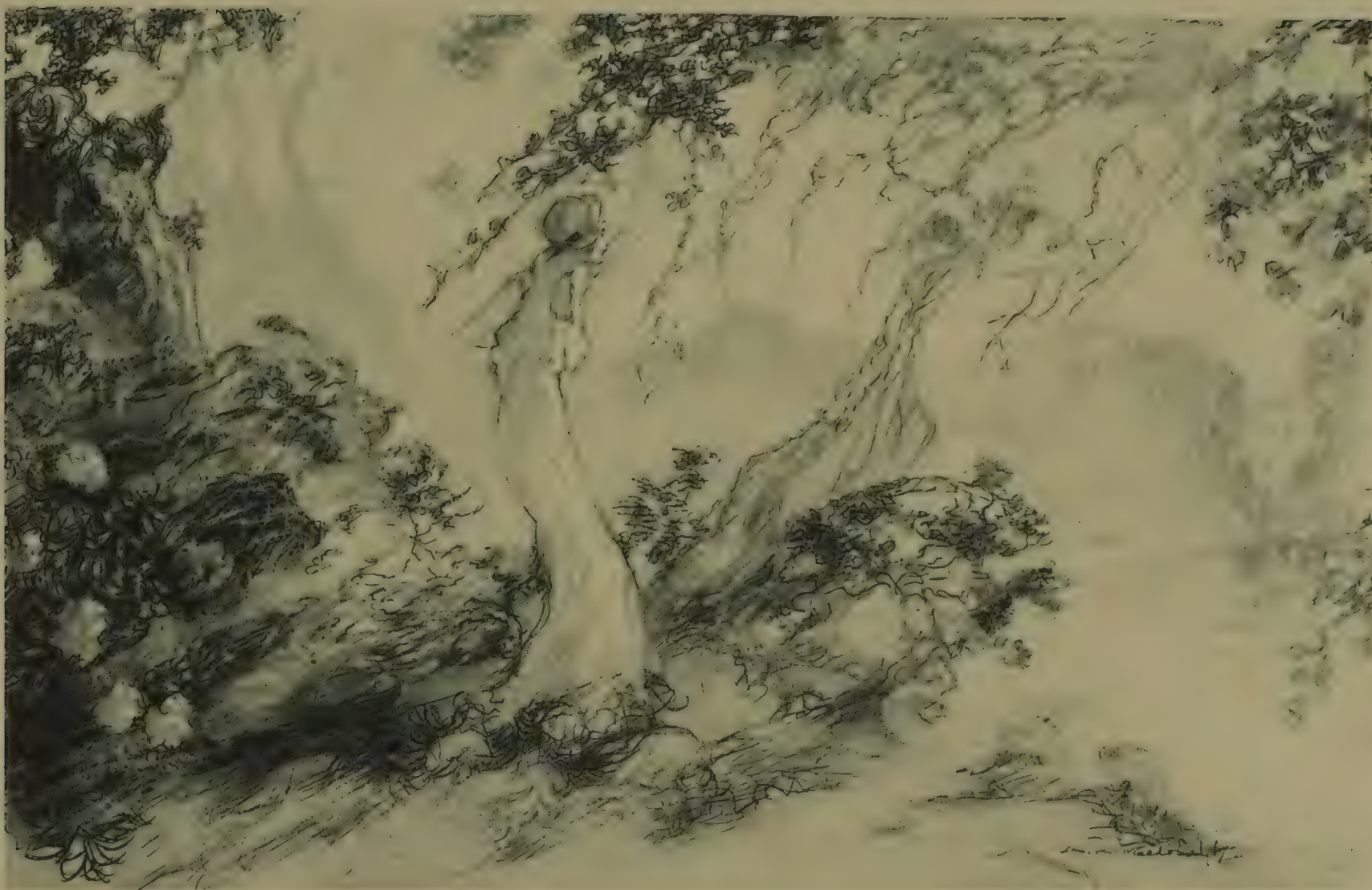
Famous Dreams: IV.—King Arthur's Vision of the Bear and Dragon.

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"THEY BEGAN A DREADFUL FIGHT, BUT THE DRAGON WITH ITS FIERY BREATH BURNED THE BEAR."

King Arthur had this dream, it is said, soon after he heard that the Emperor of Rome was preparing to attack Britain. The story is told by Geoffrey of Monmouth, who writes: "It happened that about midnight he fell into a very sound sleep; and in a dream saw a bear flying in the air, at the noise of which all the shores trembled; also a terrible dragon flying from the west, which enlightened the country with the brightness of its eyes. When these two met, they began a dreadful fight; but the dragon with its fiery breath burned the bear, which often assaulted him, and threw him down scorched to the ground. Arthur, upon his waking, related his dream to those that stood about him, who took it upon them to interpret it, and told him that the dragon signified himself, but the bear, some giant that should encounter with him; and that the fight portended the duel that would be between them. But Arthur conjectured that the vision was applicable to himself and the Emperor."



When she first used to see the valley it was in dreams.

THE HAPPY VALLEY.

By DAPHNE DU MAURIER,

Author of "I'll Never be Young Again."



Illustrations by A. K. MACDONALD.



WHEN she first used to see the valley it was in dreams, little odd snatches remembered on waking, and then becoming easily dimmed and lost in the turmoil of the day. She would find herself walking down a path, flanked on either side by tall beech trees, and then the path would narrow to a scrappy muddy footway, tangled and over-grown, with only shrubs about her—rhododendron, azalia, and hydrangea, stretching tentacles across the pathway to imprison her. And then, at the bottom of the valley, there was a clearing in the undergrowth, a carpet of moss and a lazy-running stream. The house, too, would come within her line of vision. A wide window on the ground floor, with a rose creeper climbing to the sill, and she herself standing outside this on a terrace of crazy paving. There was so great a sense of peace in her familiarity with the valley and the house that the dream became one she welcomed and expected; she would wander about the forsaken terrace and lean her cheek against the smooth white surface of the house as though it were part of her life, bound up in her, possessed. It was above all things a place of safety, nothing could harm her here. The dream was a thing precious and beloved, that in its own peculiar individual fashion never unfolded itself, nor told a story, nor followed a sequence. Nor did she remember when the dream had come to her for the first time, but it seemed to have grown with her since her illness, almost as if a stray particle of anæsthetic clung to her sleeping mind like a gentle mist.

During the day the dream would go from her, and weeks or months might pass before it came to her again, and then suddenly in the silent hush of morning when the world is asleep and before the first bird stretches his wings, she would be standing on the terrace before the house in the full warmth of the sun, her face turned to the open window. Her dreaming mind, lost to the world and intensely alive in its own dream planet, would quieten and relax, would murmur in solitude, "I'm here, I'm happy, I'm home again."

No more than this and no conclusion; it was a momentary state beyond heaven and earth, suspended in time between two strokes of a clock, and so would be vanished again, and she waking to the familiarity of her own bed-room and the beginning of another day. The clatter of breakfast cups, the street noises, the hum of the sweeper on the back stairs, all the usual homely sounds would bring her back to reality with

a shudder and a frustrated sense of loss. Since her illness she had become more than ever absent-minded, so her aunt told her; it was like living with a ghost, with someone who was not there. "Look up, listen, what are you thinking about?" And she would lift her head with a jerk, startled by the demands made upon her. "Sorry, I wasn't thinking."

"You're mooning, always mooning," came the reply, and she would flush sensitively, easily hurt, but wishing for her aunt's sake she could be brilliant and entertaining. She would pucker her forehead in a frown, and steal up to the old school-room and lean her arms on the window-sill, looking down upon the roofs of houses, glad to be alone yet aware of her loneliness, knowing in a strange unconscious fashion that this was a passage of time; she did not belong here, she was waiting for something that would bring her security and peace like the sunken tangled path in her dream, and the house, and the happy valley.

The first thing he said to her was, "You aren't hurt, are you? You walked straight into the car. I called out to you and you didn't hear."

She blinked back at him, wondering why she should be lying on her back in the road, and remembering suddenly stepping off the pavement into nothing, and she said, "I always forget to look where I am going."

Then he laughed, and said, "You silly one," brushing the dust from her skirt, while she watched him gravely, aware, with a little sick sensation, "this has happened before." She turned towards the car and it seemed to her that she recognised the set of his shoulders and the way his hair grew at the back of his head. His hands, brown and capable, they were the hands she knew. Yet her eyes could not deceive her and she had never seen him before.

"You look pale and shaken," he said, "I'm going to drive you home; tell me where it is," and she climbed in beside him, knowing that the pallor of her face was nothing to do with the accident nor her recent illness: she was white from the shock of seeing him, and the realisation that this was the beginning of things and the cycle had begun. Then her fragment of knowledge was gone from her, like the dream that departed at daybreak, and they were a man and a woman unknown to one another, talking of trivialities, glad in each other's company. She was telling him, "It's not very pretty this part of the world, just suburbs, not real country," and he smiled and said, "All country except the west seems foreign to me and dull; but then I come from Ryeshire."

"Ryeshire," she echoed, "No, I've never been as far as that," and she lingered over the word, repeating it, as though it found response in her heart like a lost chord. "I've lived here all my life," she said, and the words trailed away like words belonging to someone else, someone left behind, a younger sister, and she herself wandering through a field of sorrel with the scent of honeysuckle in her nostrils and the sound of a river in her ears, born anew, alive for the first time.

She heard herself saying, "I remember Ryeshire was coloured yellow in my atlas in school," and he laughed: "What a funny thing to remember." Then again came the flash of knowledge: "He'll tease me about that one day and I shall look back at this moment." She must remind herself that they were strangers, none of that had happened, and she was only a girl who had been ill, who was dull, who was absent-minded, and "Would you like some tea?" she said, formal and polite. "I think we shall find my aunt at home."

The patter of conversation, the crunch of toast, the maid coming in to light the lamps, the dog begging for sugar, these were natural, inevitable things; but they held significance, as if they were pictures hanging on a wall and she were a visitor to a gallery inspecting each picture in turn. And later: "Good-bye," she said, knowing she would see him again and glad at the thought, but something inside her afraid of the knowledge, wanting to thrust it aside.

That night she saw the valley very clearly; she climbed the path to the house and stood on the terrace outside the open window, and it seemed to her that the old sensation of peace and escape from the world was intermingled now with a new consciousness that the house was no longer empty, it was tenanted, it held a welcome. She tried to reach to the window but the effort was too much for her, her arms fell to her side, the image dissolved, and she was staring with wide-awake eyes at the door of her own bed-room. She was aware that it was still very early, the maids not yet astir, but the telephone was ringing in the hall.

She went downstairs and took off the receiver, and it was his voice. He was saying, "Please forgive me. I know that it's an impossible hour to ring up, but I've just had the most vivid nightmare that something had happened to you." He tried to laugh, ashamed of his weakness. "It was so strong, I can scarcely believe now it isn't true."

"I'm perfectly all right," she said, and she laughed back at him. "I was sleeping very peacefully and feeling happy. Your ringing must have awakened me. What did you think was the matter?"

"I can't explain," he said, and his voice was puzzled. "I was certain you had gone away and were never coming back. It was quite definite, you had gone away for good. There was no possible means of getting in touch with you. You had gone away on your own accord."



They stood at the window of the little inn looking down on the river. . . .

"Well, it's not true," she said, smiling at his distress, "I'm here, quite safe—but it was nice of you to mind."

"I want to see you to-day," he insisted, "just to make sure that nothing has happened. That you still look the same. You see, it's my fault, if I hadn't knocked you down with the car this wouldn't have happened. . . . That's what I felt, all mixed up in the nightmare. You will let me see you; tell me you will?"

"Yes," she said. "Yes, I'd like to see you too," because it had to happen, she had no choice, and his voice was the echo of her own thoughts, suppressed and unfulfilled.

When they were married, he used to tease her about that first morning after they had met, and how his telephoning had roused her from her sleep. "You can't escape now," he said, "you belong to me and are safe for eternity. My nightmare was indigestion. You must have

been in love with me to have answered the telephone so promptly! Look at me, what are you thinking about? Mooning again, always mooning."

He put his arm round her and kissed the top of her head, and although she clung to him in response there was a little pang in her heart because after all perhaps he had not understood; he would be like the rest of the world, irritated in spite of himself at her abstraction. "I don't moon," she said, leaning against his shoulder, aware that she loved him, but part of her still unclaimed, inviolate, that he could not touch, and for all her worship of his hands, his voice, his presence, she wanted to creep away, be silent, be at rest.

They stood at the window of the little inn looking down on the river, the rocking boats, and the distant woods beyond. "You're happy, aren't you?" he said, "and Ryeshire is as lovely as you expected, isn't it?"

"Much lovelier," she told him.

"Better than the yellow corner of your atlas?" he laughed. "Listen, to-morrow we'll explore, we'll wander over the hills, we'll plunge into the woods." He spread his map upon the table, he busied himself with plans and a guide of the district. She felt restless, stirred by a strange energy. She wanted to be out, to be walking, not idling here in the little sitting-room. "Some time I must clean the car and fill up with petrol," he said, "stroll up the road and I'll follow later. I won't be long."

She slipped out of the inn, and up the road to the bend of the river, then down to the beach, stumbling over stones and seaweed and little loose boulders of rock. She came to a creek turning westward, surrounded on either side by trees sloping to the water's edge. There were no boats in this creek; it was silent and still, the quiet broken once by the movement of a fish below the surface casting a ripple on the face of the water. Now the beach vanished into the coming tide and she must force her way through the trees to the high ground above, plunging steadily, excited for no known reason, feeling that the very silence was due to her, and the trees rustled in homage, dark and green, the outposts of enchantment.

Suddenly the path dipped, and she was taken down, down, into the confusion of a valley, her valley, the place where she belonged. The tall beech trees were on either side, and then, as she had always known it, the path dwindling to a mud track, tangled and overgrown, while yonder the house waited, mysterious and hushed, the wide windows alight as though afire with the rays of the setting sun, beautiful, expectant. She knew she was not frightened at the realisation of her dream, it was the embodiment of peace, like the answer to a prayer. At first glance the place had seemed deserted and the house untenanted, but as she came on to the terrace it was as though the white walls flushed

somehow and were strengthened, and what she had thought were weeds forcing themselves through the crazy paving were rock plants in bloom. She felt a pang of disappointment that her house should be the dwelling-place of other people. She crept closer, and raising her arms to the sill—always the final action in her dream—she gazed through the window to the room beyond. The room was cool and filled with flowers, the warm sun did not touch the coloured chintzes. It was a gay room, a boy's room, the only formal note the heavy chandelier hanging from the ceiling.

There was a table in the middle with a butterfly net on it, story-books lying on the chairs, and in the corner of the sofa a bow and arrow with a piece of broken string. A jersey was hanging from a hook on the door, and the door was open as though someone had just left the room. She leant with her cheek against the sill, rested and happy, and she was thinking "I'd like to know the boy who lives here." As she smiled, idle and content, her eyes fell upon a photograph on the mantelpiece, and she saw that it was a photograph of herself. One that she did not know, with her hair done differently, a likeness which, with all its freshness and modernity, struck her as being in contrast to the room curiously faded and old-fashioned.

"It's a joke," she thought, bewildered, "someone knew I was coming and put it there for fun." Then she saw her husband's pipe on the mantelpiece, the one with the knobbly bowl, and above, the old sporting print that her aunt had given her. The furniture, the pictures, she was intimate with them all, they belonged to her. Yet she knew these things were waiting in packing cases in her aunt's house in Middlesex and they could not be here. She felt nervous and distressed, she knew not why, and "It's a silly sort of joke," she thought, "he is making fun of my dream." But, puzzled, she hesitated, her husband did not know about the dream. Then she heard a step, and he came into the room. He seemed very tired, as though he had been searching for her a long time, and had come to the house by a different way. He looked strange, too; he had parted his hair and changed his suit.

"What's the matter?" she said, "how did you get here? Do you know the people who live in the house?" He did not hear her, but sat



Raising her arms to the sill—always the final action in her dream—she gazed through the window to the room beyond.

down on the sofa and picked up a paper. "Don't pretend any more," she said, "look at me, darling, laugh at me, tell me what has happened, what are you doing here?"

He took no notice, and then a manservant came in and began to lay tea on the table in the middle. "The sun's in my eyes," said her husband, "will you pull down the blind?" and the man came forward and jerked at the curtains, staring straight at her without recognition, ignoring her as his master had done, and the curtains were drawn so that she could not see them any more. A moment later she heard the sound of a gong.

She felt very tired suddenly, very weak, as though life were too much for her, too difficult, more than she could ever bear; she wanted to cry, and "If only I could rest I wouldn't mind," she thought, "but it's such a silly joke. . . ." and she turned away from the window and looked down the path to the tangled valley below, exquisitely scented, mysterious and deep. There would be moss there, soft bracken, the cool foliage of trees, and the lilting murmur of a brook singing in her ears. She would find a resting place there where they could not tease her, she would crouch there and hide, and presently he would reproach himself for having frightened her, and would come out on to the terrace and call down to her.

As she hesitated at the top of the path, she saw a small boy staring at her from the bushes who had not been there before. His eyes were large and brown like buttons in his face, and there was a large scratch on his cheek. She felt shy, wondering how long he had been watching her. "Everyone seems to be playing hide-and-seek here," she said. "I can't make it out, they pretend they don't see me."

He smiled, biting his nails. She wanted to touch him; he was dear for no reason; but he was nervous like a startled fawn and edged away. "Don't be afraid," she said gently, "I won't hurt you. I want to go down into the valley, will you come with me?"

She held out her hand, but he backed, shaking his head, red in the face, so she set off alone, with him trotting some distance behind, peering at her, still uncertain of her, still scared. The trees closed in upon them and the shadows, the song of the brook rang near, and she hummed to herself, lighthearted and happy. They came to a clearing in the trees and a bank of moss beside the stream. "How lovely," she thought. "How peaceful, they'll never find me here," delighted with the mischief she had planned, when the boy's voice, quiet as a whisper, came to her for the first time.

"Take care," he was saying, "Take care, you're standing on the grave."

"What do you mean?" she said, and looked down at her feet, but there was only moss beneath her; the stems of bracken, and the crushed head of a blue hydrangea flower. "Whose grave?" she said, raising her

head. Only he was not there any more; there was no boy, he was gone, and his voice was an echo. She called him: "Are you hiding? Where are you?" and there was no answer. She ran back along the path to the house, out of the shadows, and she could not find him.

"Come back, don't be frightened; where are you?" she called, and then came once more upon the terrace by the house. With a little sense of fear in her heart she saw that the white walls of the house no longer glowed in the warmth of the sun. There were weeds between the paving, not plants as she had thought. There were no curtains on the window of the room, and the room was empty, the walls unpapered, the floors bare boards.

Only the gaunt chandelier hung from the ceiling, grimy with cobwebs, and a breeze blew through the open window so that it swung very gently like the pendulum of a clock, to and fro, ticking out time. Then she turned and ran fast along the path whence she had come, up and away from the silence and the shadows, running from this place that was unreal, untrue, so desolate, forlorn. Only herself was real, and the great murky ball of the sun setting between the beech-trees at the head of the avenue, hard and red, like a flaming lamp.

He found her wandering up and down the beach by the river, staring before her, crying to herself. "But what is it, my darling?" he kept saying, "Did you fall, are you hurt?" She clung to him, clutching the safety of his coat.

"I don't know," she whispered, "I don't know. I can't remember. I went for a walk in a wood somewhere, and I forget what happened. I keep feeling I've lost something and I don't know what it is."

"You silly one," he said, "you silly, mooning one, I must look after you better. Stop crying, there's no reason to cry. Come indoors, I've got a surprise for you."

They went into the inn and he made her sit beside him in the chair. "I've got a lovely idea, and it's going to thrill you. I've been talking to the landlord of the inn," he said, his cheek against her hair. "He tells me there's a property near here for sale, a lovely old manor house, a place after your own heart. Been empty for years, just waiting for people like us. Would you like to live in this part of the world?" She nodded, content once more, smiling up at him, the memory of what had been gone from her.

"Look, I'll show you on the map," he said, "here's the house and there's the garden, right in the hollow, running down to the creek. There's a stream about here, and a clearing place in the trees, a place for you, beloved, where you can wander, and rest, and be alone. It's wild and tangled, quite overgrown in parts; they call it the Happy Valley."

THE END.



"Take care," he was saying, "take care, you're standing on the grave."

Children by Old Masters: The Beauty of Youth in Art.



"THE INFANTE DON BALTHASAR CARLOS."—BY VELASQUEZ. (1599-1660.)
(Prado Gallery, Madrid.)



"PORTRAIT OF CLARA ALEWYN."—BY DIRCK DIRCKSZ SANTVOORT.
(1610-1680.)—(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.)



"TWO YOUNG PRINCES."—BY ANTON RAFAEL MENGES. (1728-1779.)
(Prado Gallery, Madrid.)



"PORTRAIT OF A LITTLE BOY."—BY WYBRAND SYMONSZ DE GEEST.
(1592- circa 1659.)—(Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.)

"What wealth it were to possess from some Master's hand the record of a child that has been The Child to us! Each year so differing in winsomeness; and each year a world apart. It has been given to some favoured children of the bygone years thus to be made immortal—been granted to us that this single page should have been torn out of the record of their wayfaring, and such

passing glimpse caught and recorded for ever. And as we look upon each such recorded child, there comes to us a strange wonder as to what was the end of all. Did this smiling one live on so smiling, or did tragedy skulk in the wings of the drama where the frame cuts off the scene? . . ."
Haldane McFall, in "Beautiful Children."



THE PUPPET SHOW: A CHINESE NURSERY FORM OF MARIONETTES SOME THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Play and Prayer in Other Climes: Chinese Childhood of Old.

FROM A CHINESE PAINTING OF THE MING PERIOD. REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



RIDING HOBBY HORSES: CHINESE CHILDREN OF BYGONE DAYS WITH PRECURSORS OF A MODERN TOY.



MUSIC AND ACROBATICS: TURNING A SOMERSAULT TO THE SOUND OF DRUM AND GONG.

CHILDHOOD in bygone China, it would seem, differed but little in essentials from that of to-day, to judge from these delightful examples of old time art in that country. These subjects are all incidental scenes in one large Chinese scroll-painting of the Ming period, called "The Hundred Children," and are issued by the British Museum in one of its charming sets of pictorial postcards. This set also includes two other scenes—Writing and Painting, and Playing with a Phoenix. In an explanatory note we read: "The silk scroll, which is over 25 ft. long and 9½ in. high, illustrates the games and amusements of Chinese children in a series of attractive compositions melting into each other. The artist is unknown, but the painting probably dates from the latter part of the Ming dynasty (14th-17th centuries)."



SAYING THEIR PRAYERS: A CHARMING BED-TIME GROUP OF CHINESE CHILDREN OF THE OLDEN TIME.

“I said STOP,
an’ he STOPPIT!!”



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"Some Christmas, eh!"

DEWAR'S

TALKING OF HATS.

By K. R. G. BROWNE,

Author of "Yes, Madam," "Leave it to Susan," etc.

Illustrations by JOHN CAMPBELL.



R. GEORGE SHERIDAN and Miss Felicity Kent, meeting at the doorway of Mulberry Mansions, S.W.3, paused to exchange the unromantic greetings of their kind.

"Hullo, George," said Miss Kent casually. "How goes?"

"'Lo, Flick," said Mr. Sheridan, rather less casually. "I was coming to see you."

"In that case," said Miss Kent hospitably, "come right up and have a quick one. Fair freezing, I be."

As she led the way through the swing-doors that shield the entrance-hall of Mulberry Mansions from the gaze of the passing mob, there issued from a little glass hutch beside the threshold a stout, pear-shaped figure in a green baize apron. The figure of Mr. Henry Duckett, ex-sergeant of Marines, hall-porter, general factotum, and minder of everybody's business save his own.

"Evening, Miss," said Mr. Duckett, with a friendly flourish of his feather duster. "Evening, Sir. Seasonable weather, ain't it? Cold, but Christmassy, as you might say."

"Cold?" said Miss Kent, vigorously stamping her feet. "Why, I'm turning blue round the edges. How's your daughter, Duckett?"

"Elsie, Miss? Ah—that was a false alarm, that was. Kind of an indigestion-like, the doctor says—and me thinking it was the small-pox, or something of that, what with the spots and all! Quite herself again, young Elsie is, and thank you for asking. . . . 'Fraid I'll have to trouble you to walk up, Miss. Lift's conked out temp'ry."

"Again?" said Miss Kent, raising a well-tended eyebrow.

"That's right, Miss. Conked out 's afternoon with Mr. Pepper in it—him from No. 10. Took me the best part of twenty minutes to get him out. Carried on something shocking, Mr. Pepper did. Missed a train, or something of that."

"If I were you, Duckett," said Miss Kent seriously, "I'd tear that lift out by the roots and give it to the poor. Then you could haul us up and down in a basket. Come on, George—Excelsior!" And as they embarked on the laborious ascent: "Now there," she added confidentially, "is the wife for you, George."

"Eh? Where?" said Mr. Sheridan, startled.

"Elsie Duckett. One of our dizziest blondes. And she boils a beautiful egg, they tell me. I give her bits of my discarded raiment sometimes, and she looks a lot snappier in it than I ever did."

"Rot!" said George, with conviction. "And talking of wives—"

"But we're not," said Felicity amiably. "Not now, I mean. . . . Going home for Christmas, George?"

"Yup," replied Mr. Sheridan briefly. "Family prayers and no brandy on the pudding. You going to the Latimers?"

Felicity nodded: "I'm due there to-morrow. Boiled shirts and ye olde Yule log."

"Like me to drive you down?" asked Mr. Sheridan diffidently. "I mean, it's on my way, and I might as well go to-morrow as Saturday."

"That's very noble of you, George. It's not a bad idea. You know," said Felicity pensively, "I think I'm going to have rather an exciting Christmas, one way and another. Aunt Helen's hoping the mistletoe'll go to my head and get me affianced to Tony Latimer."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan loudly. "Here, I say, Flick—"

"Hooray!" said Felicity. "Here we are at the summit. Now, where's my key? Go in and stand yourself a sherry, George, while I do my face. The aunt's out bun-fighting somewhere."

Obediently George parked his hat on the hall table and entered the drawing-room, tripping over the mat, as was his habit. He did not, however, stand himself a sherry, but relapsed into the largest available chair and sat frowning thoughtfully at the ceiling. A big young man was Mr. Sheridan, massively designed and almost as wide as he was long. A slow-moving, slow-thinking young man with awe-inspiring hands and feet; the kind of young man who is at his best on football fields and at his worst in drawing-rooms. Not a strikingly intellectual young man, but none the worse for that.

The door opened again and Felicity came into the room; she wore a pleased smile and carried a square cardboard box. "George," she informed him, "you're in luck. You shall be the first person to clap an eye on my new hat. Don't you have fun?"

Extracting a small, shapeless object from the box, she turned to contemplate her reflection in the mirror. The said reflection was well worth contemplating. Miss Kent's eyes, hair, nose and figure were respectively grey, auburn, *retroussé* and svelte; her smile would have charmed a misogynistic basilisk, while her laugh had been compared by impressionable gentlemen to (a) a peal of silver bells, and (b) a purling brook. In short, a comely piece.

Setting the hat carefully upon her head, she stood back to study the effect. "Like it, George?" she asked.



"Well," said George cautiously, "it—it keeps your left ear warm anyway."

Mr. Sheridan was silent. To his untutored eye the alleged hat appeared as an amorphous fragment of green felt, adorned by a comic sort of bow arrangement. It sat upon Miss Kent's shapely head at so extreme an angle as to be almost invisible to anybody standing at her other side, being held in place presumably by will-power or suction. Had he first beheld it anywhere but upon Felicity's head, George would never have identified it as a hat.

"Well?" said Felicity expectantly.

"Well," said George cautiously, "it—it keeps your left ear warm, anyway."

"But do you like it?"

George coughed and shuffled his feet. "It's all right," he said.

"Don't quibble, George! Do you like it or don't you?"

Mr. Sheridan gulped and averted his gaze from the horror. "Well," he said uneasily, and fell silent.

"Out with it, George! Good heavens!" said Felicity scathingly.

"I believe you're afraid to say what you think!"

"Afraid?" said George, stung. "I'm not afraid! I think—"

"Yes?" Mr. Sheridan began to perspire lightly at the temples, for he was a simple-minded and forthright young man, incapable of dissimulation. Though he would gladly have died for his lady, he could not lie to her. He ran a finger round his collar and achieved an unconvincing grin.

"I'm no judge of hats, Flick," he protested feebly.

Felicity snorted in an expressive but ladylike manner.

"What a worm you are, George! If there's one thing I hate, it's a person who's afraid to say what he really thinks! Just because—"

"All right!" said George suddenly, for a man can stand only so much. "If you really want to know what I think—"

"Well?"

"I think it's awful."

There was a little pause. "I see," said Felicity. "Thank you, George."

"Well, you asked me," said George defensively, for he was already regretting his folly.

"Oh, yes," agreed Miss Kent, as from a considerable distance. "And you think I look awful in it?"

"I didn't say that!" cried George, alarmed. "I said the hat—"

"I heard you," said Felicity. She stared broodingly at her reflection, which stared broodingly back at her; as well it might, for the hat was unquestionably an awful hat. It was a hurriedly-selected hat, and hats that are chosen in haste are apt to be repented at leisure. Felicity, indeed, had begun to repent it some little time ago, and she was naturally displeased to find that Mr. Sheridan shared her opinion. Women, having no sense of justice, are funny that way. Even so, if George had had the wit to change the subject at this point, all might



Like Mahomet's coffin they hung suspended between earth and sky. "Try pushing the knob, Sir."

have been well; but he was young, and his anxiety to justify himself was his undoing. So wags the world away.

"Dash it all, Flick, you asked me——"

"Of course," said Felicity broodingly.

"Well, then, why get peeved——?"

"Who's peeved?" demanded Miss Kent, quick as a flash.

"You are," persisted George, the oaf. "You're peeved because I said that hat was awful."

"My dear, good George," retorted Miss Kent, now very remote and queenly, "you flatter yourself! What makes you think I care two hoots about what you think about my hats?"

Another pause, devoted by Mr. Sheridan to the unravelling of this not-too-lucid query. That done: "If you ask me, Flick," he said, unasked, "you *know* it's a ghastly hat, and you wanted me to say it isn't."

At this shrewd stroke—for even the George Sheridans of this world are subject to such occasional inspirations—Felicity started and drew herself up to her full but inconsiderable height.

"Really, George," she observed icily, "aren't you being rather uncouth? I mean, there's no need to be offensive!"

A flush of pardonable indignation stained Mr. Sheridan's manly cheek. That he should be thus reviled for offering an honest, if reluctant, opinion seemed to him grossly unfair. Felicity, he reflected, was behaving like a boxing-instructor, who, having laughingly invited a pupil to sock him on the jaw, is both surprised and annoyed when his invitation is accepted. Incensed by the injustice, he blundered on:

"Dash it all, Flick," he said testily, "don't be an idiot! You know perfectly well it's a ghastly hat, and if you had any sense——" Meeting Miss Kent's eye, he stopped abruptly; but he had said enough.

"Well, well!" said Felicity, in a voice that seemed to come straight from the Arctic Circle. She was no ill-tempered harriidan, but Hell knows no fury like a woman whose new hat has been tried on and found wanting. At such moments wise men get out from under; but George, as has been shown, was not overburdened with wisdom. "So I'm a senseless idiot, too? A senseless, awful-looking idiot in a ghastly hat. Well," said Felicity brightly, "one lives and learns! But——"

At this critical juncture occurred an interruption. The door opened, admitting a middle-aged lady of highly impressive physique, modishly upholstered and exuding authority at every pore. As this newcomer sailed rather than walked into the room, much as an Atlantic liner might enter an unimportant harbour, her proud blue eye alighted on and transfixed Mr. Sheridan, so that he arose from his chair as if worked by a spring.

"Oh—good evening, Mrs. Wedderburn," he said nervously.

"Felicity," said Mrs. Wedderburn, ignoring this overture. "I hope you have finished your packing. We shall have no time to spare to-morrow."

"Be of good cheer, Aunt Helen," answered Felicity docilely. "Everything's in but my toothbrush. To pack that will be the work of a moment."

"Ah," said Mrs. Wedderburn. "Well, George, I suppose you will be spending Christmas with your parents?"

"Er—yes," said George, with what was meant to be an ingratiating smile. "Yes. To-morrow. I mean, I'm going home to-morrow. I—er—I dropped in to ask Felicity if I can give her a lift to the Latimers' place. It's on my way, I mean."

Mrs. Wedderburn frowned slightly. In her capacity as guardian of her orphaned niece, she disapproved of Mr. Sheridan, as she disapproved of all males earning less than two thousand a year. A young man who toiled obscurely on the Stock Exchange, whose trousers perpetually bagged at the knees, whose lightest movement was fraught with peril to the drawing-room furniture, and whose idea of wholesome fun was to pursue a football on a muddy field—such a young man was not, in Mrs. Wedderburn's opinion, a fit playmate for Felicity. Mrs. Wedderburn, an ambitious woman, had certain definite plans for Felicity—plans in which Mr. Sheridan figured not at all. And so:

"Thank you, George," said Mrs. Wedderburn, with an indulgent smile. "But I am afraid that is out of the question. Felicity is travelling by train, with Lady Latimer and Tony."

"Oh, am I?" said Felicity, manifestly surprised.

"Yes. I have just had tea with Lady Latimer at her club. They will meet you at the station at ten-fifteen to-morrow."

Miss Kent's well-tended eyebrows rose and fell again; but she said nothing. Mr. Sheridan, rendered overbold by disappointment, chose to rush in where angels might well have feared to tread.

"Yes, but look here, Flick, you said——"

"Besides," added Mrs. Wedderburn reprovingly, "a long journey in a small open car is not very enjoyable in this weather. I am sure Felicity would prefer to go by train. Wouldn't you, my dear?"

There was a short silence. Felicity's clear grey eye dwelt briefly on Mr. Sheridan's faintly anxious countenance, and travelled thence to the green felt hat, lying limply on the table. At length: "Well, naturally," she said, in a perfectly expressionless voice. "Only a senseless idiot would want to go by car in this weather."

Mr. Sheridan started; his complexion deepened to a rich maroon and a large vein sprang into view on his forehead. He opened his mouth, closed it, opened it again and said, rather hoarsely: "I see. All right. Well—so long." The bric-à-brac on the piano quivered as he swung on his heel and strode towards the door. A moment later he was gone; a small china ornament on the mantelshelf rocked perilously as the door closed behind him with an emphatic thud.

II.

"The cab," said Mrs. Wedderburn, eying herself complacently in the hall mirror, "will be here very soon. Now I must run down and say good-bye to Mrs. Sidebotham-Smyth. She leaves for Madeira this morning."

"That's a bit of luck for Madeira," said Felicity absently.

"I will send Duckett up for your luggage," said Mrs. Wedderburn, departing, "and meet you downstairs in ten minutes."

Left alone, Felicity—becomingly hatted and gowned for the journey—lingered for a little in the hall, staring reflectively at nothing in particular. Presently she sighed, ever so faintly, and turned to re-enter the drawing-room, only to pause and turn back as the front door-bell broke into an imperious clamour. As she opened the door:

"Lo, Flick," said Mr. Sheridan.

Miss Kent was palpably taken aback; she stared dumbly at the large apparition on the doorstep.

"I've come for your luggage, *vice* Duckett," explained her visitor. "This your gear?" He walked briskly into the hall, gathered up a suit-case in each vast hand, and walked briskly out again. Miss Kent, recovered from her surprise, frowned slightly and said in a distant sort of voice:

"Really, George, you needn't bother. That's what Duckett's for. Besides——"

"This thing's working again, I see," said Mr. Sheridan. He pulled open the gate of the lift and stood waiting. Felicity hesitated, biting her lip; then she shrugged her shoulders, closed the door of the flat and stepped into the lift, somewhat in the manner of a duchess entering a swineherd's hovel. Her escort pressed the appropriate button and the little iron cage began its dignified descent.

"Nice day for a train-ride," remarked George conversationally. "Sure you've packed everything, Flick? Toothbrush? Sponge? Bedsocks? Eyebrow-tweezers?"

This pleasantry evoked no response from Miss Kent, though she glanced at him in a faintly puzzled way. "I'm on my way home, you see," continued Mr. Sheridan, "and I thought I'd just look in and—Hullo!"

With a shuddering jerk the lift came suddenly to rest, midway between two floors. Casually George pressed the button, but with no result. Again and yet again he rammed the button home, until the lift shook beneath the pressure of his massive thumb; but it remained as stationary as a man sunk to his ears in a bog.

"H'm!" said George, baffled. He looked at Felicity, who looked blankly back at him and said, as one stating a fact rather than asking a question: "Conked out again."

"You've said it," agreed George. "And now what?"

"Shout for Duckett." Promptly Mr. Sheridan drew a deep breath and gave tongue. Miss Kent shrank away, half-deafened by the din;

the lift-ropes vibrated like so many harp-strings; the echo went booming up the shaft to die in the dim recesses of the roof. By comparison the ensuing silence seemed almost audible; then a faint answering hail drifted up to them, and the sound of hurrying feet. Anon the moon-shaped face of Mr. Duckett, purplish with exertion, hove into view at the turn of the stairs.

"Jew call, Sir?" said Mr. Duckett, wheezing slightly. "Coo, I thought it was a fire, or—Lor'!" said Mr. Duckett, staring. "Don't tell me she's conked out again!"

"Well," returned George, as one anxious to be fair, "she won't budge, anyway. Up or down."

"There, now!" said Mr. Duckett, stooping and peering. The lift had stopped in such a position that the heads and torsos of its occupants were on a level with one landing, while their nether limbs were visible to anybody on the corresponding landing below. Like Mahomet's coffin, they hung suspended between earth and sky. "Try pushing the knob, Sir."

"I've done that," answered George. "In fact, I've pushed the dashed thing so far in it won't come out again. Think of something else."

"Well, I'll do my best, 'm," said Mr. Duckett cautiously, "but I can't promise nothing quick, see? Best part of twenty minutes it took me yes'day——"

"Twenty minutes? Don't be absurd!" said Mrs. Wedderburn, acidly. "Miss Kent is due at Waterloo at ten-fifteen, and it is ten to ten now. Why don't you force the gate open?"

"Ah, that I can't do, 'm," explained Mr. Duckett tolerantly. "Not when she's stuck between two floors, like. That gate'll only open when she's stopped proper. 'Sautomatic, see? Well," said Mr. Duckett, as one embarking on a forlorn hope at grave personal risk, "I'll nip downstairs and see what I can do, 'm. But I can't promise nothing quick, mind."

Exit Mr. Duckett, humming a merry air. Mrs. Wedderburn, approaching the lift, bent in a stately way to regard the inmates. Remarking Mr. Sheridan, she registered surprise and disapproval with her eyebrows.

"What," she inquired coldly, "are you doing there, George?"

"Oh, I—er—I happened to be passing," answered that gentleman bashfully. "On my way home, you know. So I thought I'd just pop



"Call that a hat? Why, I'd be ashamed to use that for a penwiper!"

Mr. Duckett, who was not ideally shaped for prolonged stooping, assumed a kneeling posture on the landing. In this devout attitude he cogitated for a space, stimulating thought by scratching his left ear.

"Jump about a bit, Sir," he suggested hopefully. "That might shake her free-like."

"No, thank you," said Felicity firmly. "He'd go clean through the floor, and I've come out without my parachute. You stay put, George. . . . But I *must* get out, Duckett. I've got a train to catch."

Mr. Duckett sat back on his heels and scratched his other ear. "Well, Miss, I'll nip down to the basement and see what I can do. I can't promise nothing quick, though, Miss. Best part of twenty minutes it took me to get Mr. Pepper out yes'day. Hall-porter, I'm supposed to be," said Mr. Duckett aggrievedly. "Not a blooming engin——"

"Shush!" said George. "Here's your aunt, Flick."

There indeed was Mrs. Wedderburn, rising majestically into view as she mounted the stairs. Her face, seen thus at floor-level, seemed twice as large as life; her façade, as inch by inch it rose above the topmost stair, quite four times as impressive.

"Felicity!" she said peremptorily. "The taxi is here. We must hurry."

"I'd love to, Aunt Helen," replied her niece, with a wistful little smile. "But I can't. I'm stuck."

"Stuck?" said Mrs. Wedderburn. "What do you——Duckett!" Mr. Duckett rose from his knees with the alacrity of one stung by a hornet. "Do you mean to say this idiotic lift has gone wrong *again*?"

Mr. Duckett, of whom only his trousers and a pair of gay magenta carpet-slippers were now visible to the imprisoned pair, was understood to mumble a shy affirmative.

"Disgraceful!" snapped Mrs. Wedderburn. "Go and put it right at once! *At once!* Miss Kent has to catch a train."

in for a moment—compliments of the season, and so forth. Then I heard you telling Duckett to fetch Flick's luggage, and I thought I'd make myself useful. And so—well," said Mr. Sheridan, coughing, "here we are."

"Sorry, Aunt Helen," put in Felicity, "but it can't be helped. No good crying over stuck lifts, is it?"

"You should have had more sense than to use the lift at all!" said Mrs. Wedderburn fretfully. "You might have known——" She broke off, glanced at her watch and uttered a clucking sound, expressive of exasperation. "Five to ten! Really, this is most annoying! Lady Latimer will be waiting at the station now. If you miss the train——"

"Let's face it, Aunt Helen," said Felicity placidly. "I probably *shall* miss the train. In fact, I'd bet on it, knowing Duckett."

Mrs. Wedderburn, now quite mauve in the face—for her stooping days were over—straightened her aching back and clucked anew.

"Tst! Tst! Lady Latimer will be wondering—it will look extremely discourteous. . . . if she waits for you, and misses the train herself. Really, this is most irritating!"

But here Mr. Sheridan lifted up his voice, saying humbly: "Look here, Mrs. Wedderburn—why not dash along to Waterloo now, and tell Lady Latimer the whole gripping story? Then she'll understand and forgive. And when we get out of here I'll bring Flick along and bung her on the next train, if any. I've got my car outside."

This eminently sensible suggestion was not received with shouts of joy from Mrs. Wedderburn. "Well——" she said uncertainly.

"It's ten o'clock," George notified her. "You'll just do it."

Mrs. Wedderburn, that harassed soul, clucked a little more and took a hurried turn about the landing, wrestling with her problem. Somewhere close at hand a clock began to strike the hour, and she came abruptly to a decision.

"Very well, Felicity," she said irritably. "I will go to Waterloo and explain to Lady Latimer. Then I will inquire about the next train and wait for you at the booking office. George, you will drive very carefully, please. That car of yours looks exceedingly unsafe to me."

With no further word of farewell, she turned away and went with dignified haste down the stairs and from their sight. She left behind her a short silence, which was broken by the voice of Mr. Sheridan, saying: "Well, well, well!"

No reply from Miss Kent.

"I hope," said George thoughtfully, "old Duckett 'll get us out of here before Christmas. I believe it's fearfully unlucky to eat turkey in a lift."

Felicity continued to hold her peace.

"You're not wearing that green hat, I see," remarked George, casually. "Chucked it away, or something?"

Felicity started slightly. "My dear George," she said, in a tone compounded equally of vinegar and honey, "do you *really* think I'd chuck a hat away because *you* didn't approve of it? That hat," explained Felicity, with a patient smile, "is a *town* hat, George. Not a country hat at all."

"Is that so?" said George. "Well, I'll take your word for it. Anyway, I'm sorry I got so wrought up about it, Flick. Dashed rude of me. That's why I blew in this morning, really. I wanted to ap—Hullo! We're off."

Such was indeed the case. With no warning save a jerk and a gentle shudder, the lift resumed its interrupted journey. Moving with a deliberation that, in the circumstances, amounted almost to an insult, it sank solemnly earthward, arrived in due course at the ground floor, and was again at rest. With a sigh of relief, Mr. Sheridan flung back the gate and bowed his fellow-captive out.

"By Jove!" he said, looking about. "The old place hasn't changed a bit! Even Duckett doesn't look a day older. . . . What's eating him, I wonder?"

Mr. Duckett, his back towards them, was standing by his little hutch, delivering a loud and apparently acrimonious address to a member of the opposite sex. The latter—a slightly improbable blonde of comparatively tender years, caparisoned about twelve months in advance of the current feminine mode—was clearly growing restive under the lash of his tongue; with resentment in every line of her fashionably emaciated figure, she was kicking sulkily at the carpet and from time to time muttering under her breath.

" . . . and that's my last word, see?" said Mr. Duckett, trenchantly. "So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it! You don't go out in that, my girl—not while you're my daughter, you don't!"



"I see," said Felicity; "well—ask away."

"It's bad enough," said Mr. Duckett bitterly, "to have you the talk of the street, what with coming in at all hours and going about dolled-up like a—like a blooming trapeze-dancer. But when it comes to making a laughing-butt of yourself, young Elsie—"

"Sssssh!" said young Elsie, suddenly.

"Hey?" said Mr. Duckett, thrown out of his stride. "Don't you sssssh *me*, my girl! I—Oh!" He paused, cleared his throat loudly, and continued in a milder tone: "Beg pardon, Miss—didn't see you was there. 'Fraid you've missed your train, after all. I done my best, but I couldn't do it no quicker."

"Nobody could have done it quicker," Mr. Sheridan assured him kindly. "And what's a train, between friends? Waterloo's crawling with 'em."

"In that case," said Felicity, moving towards the door, "we'd better hurry, or Aunt Helen—"

"Excuse me, Miss," said Mr. Duckett respectfully, "Could you spare a minute to speak to young Elsie here?"

"Me?" said Felicity, staring. "What about?"

"That there hat she's got on," said Mr. Duckett, scowling balefully at his offspring. "Looks ridic'ulous, don't it? Making herself a laughing-butt, that's what she's doing. She won't listen to me, but if you was to—"

"Sssssh!" said Miss Duckett urgently. "Give over, Dad, do!"

"You shut up," requested her parent curtly. "Call that a hat? Why, I'd be ashamed to use that for a penwiper! Look at Miss Kent here—laughing all over her face at you! She *knows* about hats, Miss Kent does, see? I'm as partial to a bit of fun as any man," said Mr. Duckett, rather inconsequently, "but that there hat's past a joke. 'S a nightmare, that's what—"

"Will you give over!" hissed Miss Duckett, in a penetrating whisper. "It was her gave it me!"

Mr. Duckett started violently; his jaw dropped, and his eyes began to bulge. "Wossat?" he said faintly.

There was a tense little pause. Then Felicity laughed—a slightly unnatural laugh—and said in a colourless voice: "Yes, I gave it to her. Last night, as a matter of fact."

"Lor!" muttered the stricken Mr. Duckett.

Felicity shot a swift glance at Mr. Sheridan, standing elaborately still and silent in the background. She drew a quick breath and went gamely on: "But your father's quite right, Elsie. It doesn't suit you—I can see that now. Green's not your colour, really. Tell you what—come up and see me after Christmas, and we'll dig you out another. How's that?"

"Thank you, Miss," said Miss Duckett politely.

"Good!" said Felicity brightly. "Don't forget. Well, we must shove along. Happy Christmas, both of you! Coming, George?"

To the accompaniment of vague but respectful mumbles from the Duckett family, she pushed open the swing-doors and walked sedately down the steps to where Mr. Sheridan's small, battered, and cherished car waited at the kerb. Mr. Sheridan followed her a moment later; but not until he had assisted her to her seat, enfolded her carefully in a rug, and established himself behind the steering-wheel did he see fit to speak. Then:

"Talking of hats—" he said, and grinned. The grin became a chuckle, the chuckle a laugh, that echoed down the wintry street and made the welkin ring. For a while Miss Kent resisted the infection; then she, too, began to laugh and went on laughing until the tears stood in her eyes. When she could speak coherently again:

"And it looked better on Elsie," she said feebly, "than it did on me! You were absolutely right, George. I knew all the time it was a ghastly hat. And after we had that row about it I simply loathed the beastly thing. I'm a pig-headed idiot. Sorry."

"Granted as soon as asked," said George, still grinning. "I ought to have been more tactful about it, anyway. That's why I came round to-day. I didn't want—well, it seemed a pity—Christmas, and all that, I mean."

"I know," said Felicity, nodding. "That's why I was glad you came round to-day, though I wasn't going to say so. I—talking of Christmas, what about Waterloo? I mustn't miss the next train."

"But you have, old dear," said George serenely. "There isn't a next train. The ten-fifteen's the only one that makes the connection—I looked it up."

"You looked it up?" said Felicity sharply. "When, George? You couldn't—George!"

"Yeah?"

"The lift! It wasn't—you didn't—"

Mr. Sheridan's grin shone out again. He cocked an unrepentant eye at her and winked—a vast and vulgar wink, replete with meaning.

"There are more ways of killing a cat," he said, "than drowning it in old brown sherry. I bet that's the easiest quid old Duckett ever earned. You see, I wanted to drive you down to the Latimers."

"George!"

"I've left a message for Aunt Helen. She'll have started back by now."

"Poor Aunt Helen!" said Felicity, though not altogether as if she meant it. "But, George—why did you want to drive me down to the

Latimers? Just for company?"

George turned in his seat and looked at her, and the grin was no longer in evidence. "Partly that," he said, "and partly because there's something I want to ask you before Christmas—what with Tony Latimer, and one thing and another. I meant to ask you last night, but—so I had to arrange this."

"I see," said Felicity. "Well—ask away."

"What, here?" said Mr. Sheridan indignantly. "Have a heart, Flick! I know a better place than this!"

Miss Kent smiled delightfully and drew the rug more closely about her.

"Then, what," she said very meekly, "are we waiting here for, George?"

[THE END.]

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McLAREN'S HILL. (Continued from Page 6.)

the soldier, grave anxiety in his mild eyes. Late in the evening the delirium lifted, and McLaren came to himself. "Any news, doc?"

The doctor quietly handed him a heliograph form. Only the gravity of the message had prevented him from suppressing it. McLaren, sick or well, commanded the post. He should know.

The sick man read: "Chinese attacked hill 18.00 hours. aaa. Driven back with loss. aaa. Our casualties 43. aaa. Expect further attacks shortly. aaa. Can you spare thirty mounted infantry? Cox."

McLaren's eyes snapped anxiously. "Forty-three casualties. My God, this is serious! Here, doctor—"

His voice was vibrant, the urgency of the occasion lending it strength. "Send for Subadar Dalbahadur Thapa, the Mounted Infantry Commander, at once."

An orderly darted away in search of the Gurkha officer, while McLaren tossed impatiently on his bed.

"What time was that message received?" he asked abruptly.

The doctor consulted the form. "18.30 hours it says."

"And the time now?"

"Ten minutes to seven," the Hindu answered.

"Nearly an hour since the attack," McLaren mused thoughtfully. "If they can hold on through the night, I'll see them through. Give me a pencil and some paper, will you?"

He wrote for a minute, and laid aside the paper as a quick step sounded outside. "That's Dalbahadur. Send him in."

The Gurkha officer stood stiffly at attention while McLaren gave his orders.

"The Chinese have attacked our column on the hill. You will take out thirty mounted infantry at once as a reinforcement, because the enemy are—holding their own. You must get there as soon as possible—there is no time to lose."

His voice weakened as suddenly as it had gained strength, and the next words came painfully from his pale lips.

"I am coming too. These men will accompany me."

He read names from the list he had scribbled a minute before. A violent start shook the grizzled old Gurkha; then he listened with a face of wood while McLaren read on through the list of names—twenty men who had fallen in the attack on the hill a year ago.

He finished reading and turned to the doctor. "Jot down a message, will you. Got the pad and pencil? Right. Take down: 'Cox. Hold on. Coming as soon as I can. McLaren.' Tell the signaller to get a lamp message through."

He sank back on his pillow, exhausted with the effort he had made, and his breath came in quick, gusty jerks. The doctor tiptoed away from the bed, beckoning to the Gurkha to follow. They consulted together in earnest voices.

"And now I'm going to get up." The words were almost a whisper, but with a mighty effort McLaren scrambled from his bed and on to his feet.

"You must not; you must not!" The doctor turned frantically and leaped towards his patient—too late. McLaren had pitched forward on his face.

"You have your orders, Subadar Sahib. Go, and go quickly," the Hindu whispered, as together they lifted McLaren on to the bed.

The Gurkha saluted the prostrate figure and left the room, gravel scattering under his feet as he broke into a run outside. Forty-three casualties an hour ago and sixty miles of broken country before his reinforcement could arrive.

"They'll be coming again soon, Jemadar Pahalman. Warn the men to keep alert." Cox spoke through teeth clenched over a bandage which he was winding painfully round a wrist smashed by a Chinese bullet. The Gurkha who stood beside him saluted and vanished into the darkness, to return a few minutes later.

"They are ready, Sahib." Cox glanced at his watch. Ten minutes to seven. His message for reinforcements had gone out half an hour before. The answer should be coming any moment now. A quick blinking of light miles away in the darkness roused him.

"Lamp message coming through, signaller," he warned.

The distant blinking steadied to the dot-dash of a message. Then a bush crackled beside Cox, and a signaller stood by proffering a form.

Cox read by the light of the shuttered signal-lamp. "Hold on. aaa. Coming as soon as I can. McLaren." "Now what the hell does the man mean—as soon as I can? He's too ill to move."

The puzzled officer translated the message to his jemadar, and was surprised at his confident reply.

"He will come, Sahib," the Gurkha affirmed. "I was with him when we took this hill, and he swore it then."

Cox was a dour and unimaginative officer, exhilarated by drink and fighting only. "Nonsense! He's too ill," he snapped.

His further speculations were interrupted by the flaring arc of a Verey light and a warning cry from the section on his right flank. The Chinese were moving up to attack the hill again.

Cox was a brave man, but he groaned inwardly then. He had hoped for a respite till light and the expected reinforcement gave him a fighting chance. Sniping had accounted for seven more of his men, and his tiny force of twenty-five could not possibly withstand the hundreds opposed to them.

"Rapid fire, Jemadar Sahib. Pass it down the line," he ordered.

A staccato crackling broke out, pitifully meagre and inadequate. Now and again a cry of pain from in front indicated a man hit, but Cox thought grimly of the hundreds behind. The slope along which the Chinese were now advancing was covered in thick undergrowth, and a long, continuous rustle of bushes told the listening officer what the darkness kept hidden. It was a mass attack. The Chinese commander was determined that this time there should be no mistake.

Cox strained his ears. They were two hundred yards away, perhaps less. Crash—crash—crash! The crackle of the parted undergrowth drew inexorably nearer and nearer. Then the shrill blast of a whistle cut the air. An instant hush followed. The line had come to a halt; an ominous stop preluding their charge, Cox thought.

"Get ready!" he shouted.

"Sahib!" His jemadar stepped towards him, an unusual note of excitement in his voice. "Sahib! There are men down there on our right flank; our men, Gurkhas. The flank section commander reports it."

"Thank God!" Cox's relief was fervent. McLaren must have sent off a party long before he had received the message asking for help.

The jemadar had been listening intently. He looked up and spoke. "Our men are attacking, Sahib."

Cox heard English orders rapped out by guttural Gurkha voices, and the tramping of booted feet, so easily distinguished from the shuffle of the felt-shod Chinese.

"Rapid fire!" The order came from below them on the right, thin and weirdly indistinct, and the shots which followed caused Cox and the jemadar to exchange a quick glance of amazement. The reinforcement was hardly two hundred yards away, but the reports were muted, barely audible, like shadows of rifle-fire.

"Dud ammunition!" Cox muttered. "Or they've got a box of blank cartridge by mistake."

"Prepare to rush." The order came again, and there was something eerie and unhuman about the voice that set Cox shivering violently. He stole a glance at his jemadar, and saw in the dim light cast by the signal-lamp that his stolid face was ashen.

"Come on, you little devils! Worry 'em! Give 'em hell, the sons of —"

Now the voice was unmistakably English. It was McLaren's voice, but it possessed that same strange, unreal quality that the other had, and Cox's exhilaration was damped by a quick, chill dread. Following the cry there came the scuffle of advancing men.

No sound had come yet from the halted Chinese line. Now the night was rent by a single concerted cry of pure terror, followed by the stampeding rush of hundreds of frightened men. The undergrowth crashed under their headlong flight as they surged round the brow of the hill towards their own frontier. Deliberate, slow, malignantly inexorable, the marching feet of a small body of men followed in their wake.

"A Verey light. For God's sake, someone put up a light!" Cox found himself saying. The flare shot into the air, lighting up the ground below the hill. It showed—nothing.

"What did you see, Jemadar Sahib?"

Cox's voice trembled in spite of the control he forced on himself. The puzzled Gurkha shook his head, but Cox's runner spoke unexpectedly.

"I saw one man, Sahib. It was Setuman, my wife's brother."

The jemadar turned on him savagely, his usually curt voice pitched in a key bordering on hysteria. "Fool! Shut thy mouth! Setuman was killed on this hill twelve months ago!"

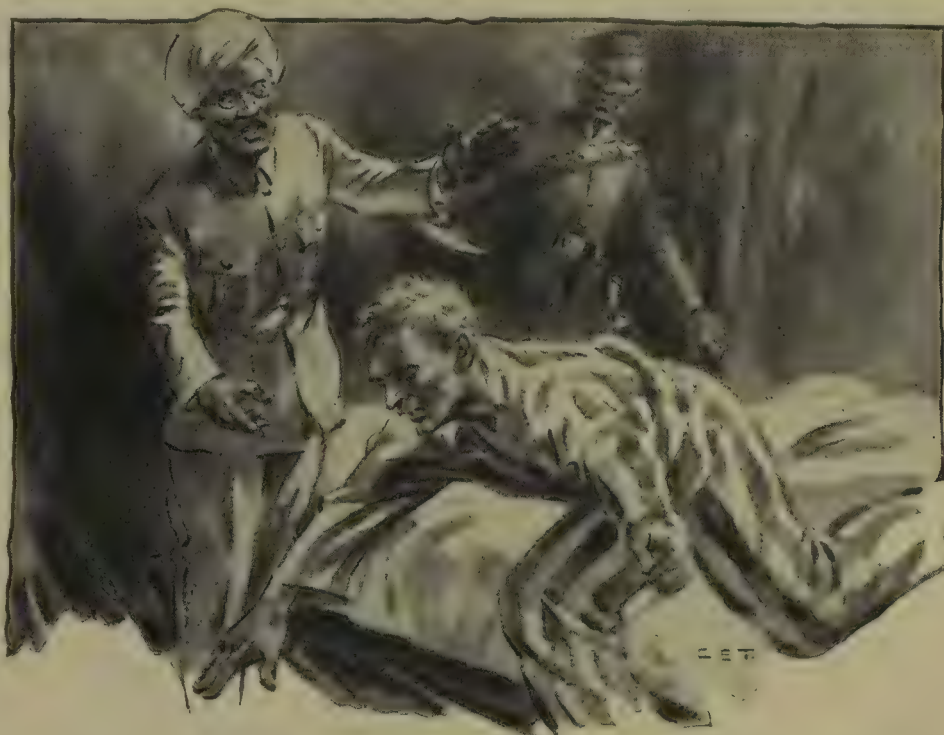
All night long the remnant of Cox's column, unmolested by the enemy, but subdued and quiet, almost like a vanquished force, guarded the hill which they had not lost, and yet had not completely held.

At early dawn thirty tired ponies, carrying men who drooped in their saddles as they rode, approached the hill. Their leader dismounted stiffly as they neared Cox. It was Subadar Dalbahadur Thapa.

He saluted, and rapped out his report.

"Thirty mounted infantry, Sahib, sent by McLaren Sahib Bahadur. The Sahib would have come himself, as he swore he would, but he died at seven o'clock last evening."

[THE END.]



The doctor turned frantically and leaped towards his patient—too late. McLaren had pitched forward on his face.

"THE CYMBAL BOY" (Continued from Page 6.)

should never be parted, whilst you drink our healths, I shall quench my thirst at a sweeter fountain."

The guests were ripe for a jest, and laughter roared in her ears as Dom Joao swung Jacintha up, her dangling feet level with the wine-glasses. She was held close, her body bent back cruelly, her mouth plundered. She wrenched herself free, and stood for a moment poised on the table. Then, snatching up a goblet, she screamed: "There, take your drink." And flung it full at Dom João's greedy lips. There was silence. The wine dripped down his cheek; blood oozed from a cut on his forehead.

"Thank you, Senhorita, I shall remember this. I like spirit. I had forgotten that kisses must be paid for. We will make a reckoning on our wedding night."

He raised his hand, and panic-stricken lest he should touch her again, Jacintha caught up her full skirts and leapt from the table. A chair crashed behind her, voices commanded; but, heeding nothing, she fled out of the room to the comfort of Pepita's arms—Pepita, who waited anxiously, hovering outside the door to learn the fate of her darling.

The clammy autumn dusk crept into the church of Santa Maria. It eddied round the pillars, laid a finger of tarnish on the gilt cherubs, and mildewed St. Joseph's beard. Nick waited impatiently, scanning the few bowed figures before the altars. What could the child be after? He could have sworn she was too guileless to play with him. "She'd twined herself into his heart-thoughts—the little soft, dark thing, with her smiles and her tears, and the quick flame of her eyes. The church was almost empty. He turned to go, and as he did so he felt a hand tug at his cloak. In the dim light he could see a wrinkled face peering up at him anxiously. "Are you the English soldier?" Pepita whispered.

"Yes, are you from—"

"Hush, do not say the name." She beckoned him into a deserted side chapel, and then stood solemnly appraising him, from his bare curly head to his big gaitered boots. Her beady eyes twinkled with approval. Here was a likely young Senhor for her maid. Nick, amused and impatient, suffered the old woman's scrutiny. "Well, are ye satisfied, Mother? Will you give me your message now?"

"Eh, your Excellency, I thought I'd missed you. My Senhorita would have been in a rare rage if I had—bless her—though poor lamb, she's in no mood for rages now. Dry bread and a locked door, her father says, till he finds her of a meeker turn of mind. And that won't be this side of the grave, or I'm mistaken."

"There's a brave heart!" cried Nick. "She won't have the husband they've chosen for her, eh?" He found himself very pleased by the thought of Jacintha's rebellion.

"Have him? Have Dom João? Heaven forbid! The saints preserve my lamb from him! Some say he's the devil himself, and indeed I think they speak true, for no child of God would use folk as he does. He's beaten two of his servants till they were red jellies; and as for his first lady, the Senhora Lina—peace be on her soul—he sent her to her death as sure as Lobo the cook sends pigeons to the pie—with a twist of their white necks." Nick stared at Pepita's frightened face. He had heard no good of Dom João himself. "Then in God's name what's her father after, promising her to that lusting bully?"

"Dom João is rich. The Juiz wishes to see her married."

Nick paced up and down restlessly. "Did she send me a message?" he asked. "Senhor, she wrote nothing, but she said I was to tell you she was afraid, and save for yourself—without a friend."

"Ah, at least she counts me that. Well, what's to be done?"

"Senhor, if there should come a man to Dom José offering to take the Senhorita without a dowry, then She made an expressive gesture—"it is not for nothing that they call Dom José 'O Avaro,' the mean one."

Nick stopped abruptly in front of her. "D'you think she'd have me? It's a poor rough life I'd take her to, and me at the wars."

"Senhor," the old woman said simply, "when she wept in my arms last night she had no trust in any man save yourself. I do not think hardships would trouble her—her mother was a gipsy, and to them

freedom is better than a feather bed." Nick hesitated, and Pepita misread his uncertainty. "Oh, Senhor, she is worth more in a woollen smock than princesses with rings on every finger, and dowries of—"

"Dowries be damned!" said Nick. "Devil a dowry am I after. It's of herself I'm thinking. Half a cloak to sleep under, and a goblet of meat out of a stew-pot is poor bed and board for a lady gently reared. But if she's willing and if Dom José consents, maybe I could send her home to Thorpdale. No, no, you poor fond creature—" For Pepita was kissing his hand and calling down blessings on his head.

So they parted, and next day, full of confidence that the Portugee would welcome his handsome proposals, Nick waited on the Juiz da Fora and asked for the hand of his daughter. It was refused; and Nick found himself the other side of a slammed door with no consolation save the knowledge that his own conceit had made him commit an error of tactics. For, alas! Dom José considered him no better than a common soldier, and had been deeply insulted by his proposal; worse still, he had seen in it the reason for Jacintha's rebellion, and had issued orders forthwith that his daughter should stay locked in her room until the 14th of December, which was the day chosen for her marriage with Dom João. Nick's wounded pride made him keep his own counsel, and his schemes for the rescue of Jacintha failed one after the other. He soon discovered that the Juiz was all-powerful in Campo Mayor, and the only ally on whom he could count was old Pepita. She came every day to the church of Santa Maria to play postman for the love letters, which became more ardent and more despairing as the weeks went by.

One evening, early in December, Nick sat before the fire at the inn. A cold rain lashed the window-panes, and the wind sent gusts of wood-smoke down the chimney, which filled the room and added to the smart in Nick's eyes. He bent over a letter. An anguished tenderness filled his heart, for he had failed his little dark lady, and she had written "adios" at the foot of the page. "Adios," that terrible word, with its implication of eternal farewell. Warily he took up his quill—he had an hour in which to bid her good-bye, for Pepita was not to be at the church till seven. The sound of shouting and jolly raucous singing broke through the noise of the storm, and the inn door crashed open as three of his comrades of the 88th clattered into the room.

"Hey, Nick, me boy-O, we're off on the march again," roared Mat Durin, as he flung off a steaming cloak.

The others called for "vino," and as the landlord hurried away to fulfil their orders, Jimmy Gough cried after him: "Give us your best, my fine Portugee, for likely as not it'll be the last glass we'll have of you."

Nick looked up dully. "What d'you mean?"

"We're away, lad. Marching Orders. We're to make Monte Forte by the 12th. So here's to ourselves, to the Colonel, and the Connaught boys." He tipped his head back and let the liquor gurgle down his throat. He set down his glass and then, seeing Nick's drawn face and his untouched wine, he added with quick kindness: "What's the matter, lad?"

"Aye, what's up, Nick?" "Out with it—" They crowded round him: Mat, and Jimmy, and big Pat Fox, patting his shoulder, pressing the drink on him, giving him their large and wholesome sympathy.

Nick told them. He was past caring now whether they thought him a fool or not, and his humility stood him in good stead; for had you looked through the window of the inn that night, you would have seen four honest lads round a trestle table, with pens and ink and paper, for all the world like four great generals planning a victory. "We'll wait here," says Mat, putting a cross on the map they'd drawn. "Given warning, she'll not be frightened, and you can stay at the inn for all the world to see you." Jimmy scratches his head. "Lampblack's the stuff," he murmurs sagely, "that'll not smart her pretty eyes."

"Take pen and paper, Nick," Pat Fox commands, "and bid her ask that they let her have absolution before her bridemass. They'll not deny her confession before her marriage, that's certain—and bid her turn meek, and deceive 'em, so they think she's given in."

"I'll tell her," Nick laughs, his spirits soaring, "but it's little they know of my maid if they believe she'd change her blessed mind—the valiant little creature."

The Connaught Rangers were to move their winter quarters, and Campo Mayor hummed with preparations for their going. The market

(Continued overleaf.)

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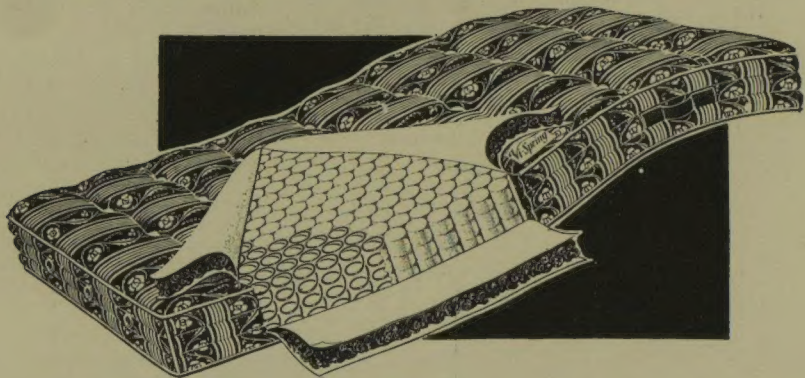
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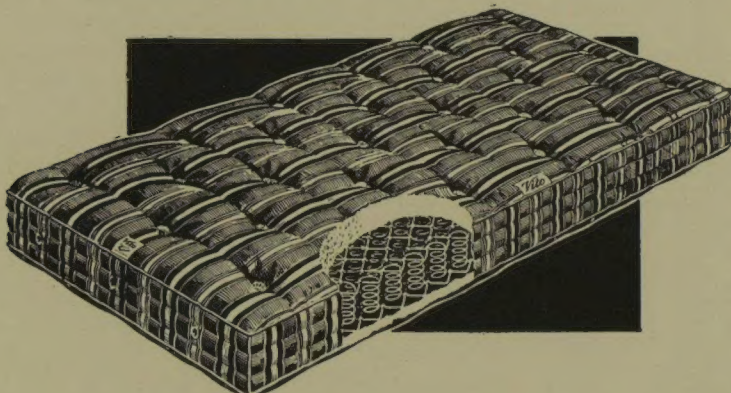
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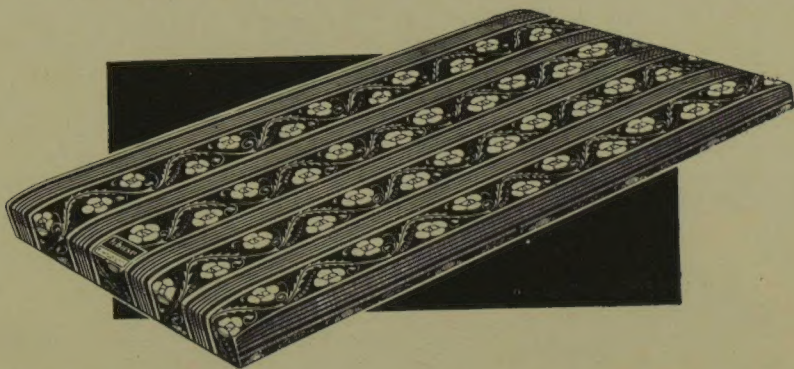
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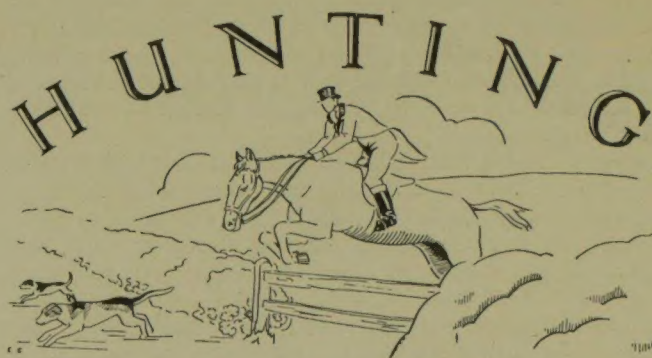


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Strike out what does not apply.

square was full of wagons, of mules and bales of fodder; of soldiers buying and townsfolk selling. The sound of farewells, kisses, disputes, and haggings rose on the morning air as the coachman of the Juiz da Fora drove his carriage through the press towards the notary's house, where the Colonel of the 88th was known to lodge. Colonel Wallace had little leisure on this day of all days, but the complaint of the angry judge was of too grave a nature to be lightly set aside. A charge of abduction, and against the Drum Major of the Connaught Rangers—it was a matter for some consideration.

Dom José told his tale. He had returned that morning from a visit to Dom João, Conde de Evora, to be greeted with the news that his daughter, his heiress, had been carried off the night before. She had accompanied her aunt, Senhora Gonsalves, to the church of Santa Maria, there to make her confession before her marriage, and on leaving the building—which was almost deserted—three men, masked and wearing military cloaks, stepped out from behind the pillars of the nave and seized upon the young lady. Senhora Gonsalves was then most roughly used, gagged, blindfolded, and left in a side chapel, where the priest discovered her some hours later. Meanwhile the Senhorita had been spirited away by the ruffians. Dom José, his lean hands emphatic with fury, went on to inform Colonel Wallace of the impertinent proposals of the Drum-Major, whom he suspected to be at the bottom of this affair. For had not Senhora Gonsalves noted the willingness of the victim, to say nothing of the yellow cuffs and military buttons on the culprit's coat-sleeves? Dom José thumped the table before him. He demanded the return of his daughter and the punishment of the offenders.

Colonel Wallace suavely promised him every assistance, and Nick was summoned and informed of the charge laid against him. He expressed great surprise, denied all knowledge of the matter, and produced half a dozen comrades to attest to the fact that he had been playing cards and

drinking Malaga at the moment of the young lady's abduction. Colonel Wallace concealed a smile. He knew his Nick, and he had no love for the Juiz, who in a hundred petty ways had refused himself and his officers the assistance which would have made their stay in Campo Mayor a pleasant one. Therefore when Dom José demanded permission to search Nick's lodging, the Colonel, all courtesy and commiseration, accompanied him. He wasn't going to miss the sport of seeing Judge Skinflint diddled of his daughter. The inn was searched from attic to cellar; presses were opened; Nick's hair-trunk emptied; the landlord questioned—and all to no purpose. The party came out into the inn-yard, where the equipment of the band was spread out in a glittering array. Nick had ordered a final inspection and counting of the instruments. The drums were ranged along the wall, the bugles stood up-ended, and squatting on the cobblestones, the negro cymbal boys polished their brass discs. The Colonel stopped to watch them. They were his pet extravagance—his toy. He pointed them out to the Juiz.

"What do you think of these monkeys, Sir? I bought 'em in Buenos Ayres, where the regiment was stationed before we were ordered here—for the defence of Portugal. I took a notion that these little Sambos would look well in the band. We dress 'em in the Moorish style, and I do assure you they cut a fine figure. But what's this, Thorp, I see one of 'em wears a green turban; I gave orders they were all to be in red; and, why, damme if there aren't—" The Colonel looked up testily, but his Drum-Major cast him such an odd glance that he thought it best to say no more. His eyes twinkled. Four, or five, little niggers was it they brought back from Buenos Ayres? Anyway the number didn't signify.

"Very good, Sir. I'll see that it's changed," Nick answered quickly, and catching the dusky-faced offender by the shoulder, he pushed him through the nearest door. "Get within, yer varmint, and put on your proper headgear." The boy disappeared, and the Colonel hastened to engage the Juiz in further talk.

"You see, Judge, although I dress 'em in fandangos I make a uniform of it, all alike, red sashes, red turbans, and regimental jackets—"

"Sir!" snapped Dom José, "I am more concerned with the recovery of my daughter than the wardrobes of your blackamoors."

All that day the Juiz continued his quest, but with no success, and at the Colonel's suggestion he took up his place the following morning outside the town gate, from whence he could watch the whole regiment file past him; could scrutinise every face, and thus reassure himself that wherever his daughter might be it was certainly not amongst the ranks of the Connaught Rangers, nor yet with their camp followers. Dom José sat in his carriage watching the winter sunshine glitter on bayonet and button, on scarlet coat and snowy cross-belt, as the gallant 88th took the road to Monte Forte. Nick, magnificent with silver lace and crimson sash, whirled his staff to the arrogant beat of the fifes and drums playing "Saint Patrick's Day," and behind him tramped the band. The Juiz da Fora was not a military man, and perhaps for that reason he failed to wonder why—amidst so much dazzling efficiency, the fifth cymbal boy should be so woefully out of step. But this lack of observation cost him a daughter, deprived Dom João of his bride, and caused Jacintha's wish to come true—for she went to the wars like a man. Certainly she did not ride, she marched a-foot; and her "sharp sword" was no more than her own little stiletto, but for all that she was well content, and since there is no time now to tell of all that befell her after she marched away, we will leave her at Monte Forte. Nick is washing the black from her face with tender, clumsy hands, and Mat and Jimmy and big Pat Fox are waiting outside with the priest, ready to do groomsman at her wedding. Yes, we'd best leave Jacintha here, for this is a true story, and like most true stories that have soldiers for their heroes, it ends sadly. Nick knew—none better—that a halt should be called on a cheerful note with a fine roll of drums, and thus, I think, he would have us end his tale.

[THE END.]



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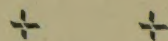


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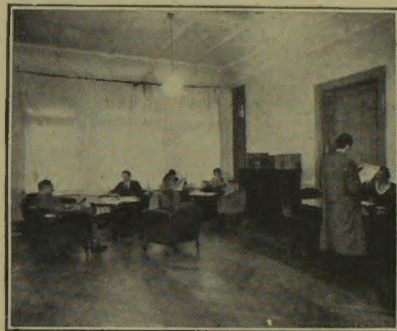
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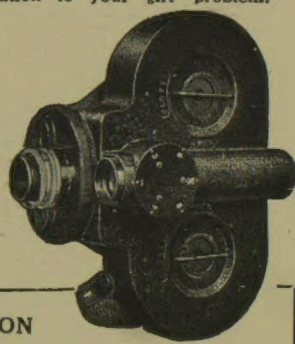
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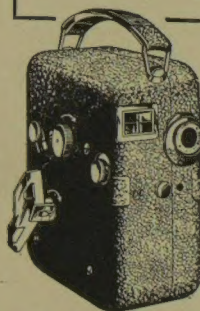
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